

The IMAGE of GOD in the GARDEN of EDEN

*The Creation of Humankind
in Genesis 2:5–3:24 in Light of
mīs pî pīt pî and wpt-r Rituals of
Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt*

Catherine L. McDowell

SIPHRUT 15

Literature and Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures

The Image of God in the Garden of Eden

Siphrut

Literature and Theology of the Hebrew Scriptures

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For my mother, Jean McDowell Cockerham

וְתִפְאֶרֶת בְּנִים אֲבוֹתָם

The glory of children is their parents. (Proverbs 17:6b)

And for my "images," Lindsay and Ben

לְכֹר־בְּנִים שְׁמָעוּ לִי יִרְאַת יְהוָה אֶלְמֶדֶם

Come, children, listen to me;

I will teach you the fear of the LORD. (Psalm 34:11)

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Abbreviations

General

BM	tablets in the collections of the British Museum
CF	Cairo Fragment
ESV	English Standard Version
J	Jahwistic source
KJV	King James Version
LF	London Fragment
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NIV	New International Version
NJPSV	New Jewish Publication Society Version
NR	Nineveh Version
P	Priestly source
RSV	Revised Standard Version
TNK	Taanak

Reference Works

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	Freedman, D. N., ed. <i>The Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . 6 vols. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1992
AfOB	Archiv für Orientforschung: Beiheft
AHW	von Soden, W. <i>Akkadisches Handwörterbuch</i> . 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1965–81
AJSL	<i>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature</i>
ANET	Pritchard, J. B., ed. <i>Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament</i> . 3rd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BDB	Brown, F.; Driver, S. R.; and Briggs, C. A. <i>Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Oxford: Clarendon, 1907
BIFAO	<i>Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale</i>
BR	<i>Bible Review</i>
BSO(A)S	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental (and African) Studies</i>
CAD	Oppenheim, A. L., et al., eds. <i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> . 21 vols. (A–Z). Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1956–2011
CBOTS	Coniectanea Biblica, Old Testament Series
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CSSH	<i>Comparative Studies in Society and History</i>
ETCSL	Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GKC	Kautzsch, E., ed. <i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i> , trans., A. E. Cowley. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1910

HALOT	Koehler, L.; Baumgartner, W.; and Stamm, J. J. <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Translated and edited under supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 5 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–2000
HS	<i>Hebrew Studies</i>
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HUCA	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
JANES	<i>Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society</i>
JARCE	<i>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</i>
JAS	<i>Journal of Asian Studies</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JCS	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>
JEA	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JRAI	<i>Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute</i>
JRAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
JSOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KAV	Keilschrifttexte aus Assur verschiedenen Inhalts
MAR	<i>Mitteilungen für Anthropologie und Religionsgeschichte</i>
OMROL	<i>Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden</i>
Or	<i>Orientalia</i>
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>
RSR	<i>Religious Studies Review</i>
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
SAK	Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur
SBB	Stuttgarter biblische Beiträge
SBLWAW	Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Ancient World
SJOT	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
STT	Gurney, O. R.; Finkelstein, J. J.; and Hulin, P., eds. <i>The Sultantepe Tablets</i> . 2 vols. Occasional Publications of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara 3, 7. London: British Institute of Archaeology, 1957–64
TB	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
TDOT	Botterweck, G. J., and Ringgren, H., eds. <i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974–2006
TLOT	Jenni, E., ed, and Biddle, M. E., trans. <i>Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . 3 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997
TS	<i>Theological Studies</i>
TZ	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
UF	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
VAB	Vorderasiatische Bibliothek
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WB	Erman, A., and Grapow, H. <i>Das Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache</i> . Berlin : Akademie-Verlag, 1953
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZÄS	<i>Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde</i>

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Statement of the Project

No biblical text has received more attention than the opening chapters of Genesis. In particular, the creation of humans in the image (*selem*) and likeness (*dāmūt*) of God, as it is described in Gen 1:26–27, has generated a tremendous amount of discussion throughout the history of biblical interpretation since it raises the fundamental question of the relationship between human beings and God.¹ Are *selem* and *dāmūt* distinct terms, referring respectively to humans' natural and/or supernatural likeness to God? Is the correspondence to the divine limited to spiritual qualities, and/or should these terms be understood in a purely corporeal sense? Alternatively, should both spiritual and physical likeness be included in what it means to be made *baṣelem* 'ēlōhīm?

The so-called second account of creation, traditionally delimited as Gen 2:4b–3:24,² describes human origins quite differently from Genesis 1. In contrast to the lofty statement in Genesis 1 that humanity was created in God's image and likeness, in Gen 2:7 the man (*hā'ādām*) is formed (*yṣr*) from the dust of the earth (*'āpār min hā'ādāmāh*). He is infused with the breath of life (*nismat hayyīm*), but there is no mention of *selem* or *dāmūt* in Genesis 2. Are we to conclude, therefore, that in contrast to Gen 1, the Eden story does not conceive of humanity as created in the image of God?

A comparison of Gen 2:5–3:24 with two sets of rituals from Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt, the *mīs pī pīt pī* (Washing of the Mouth, Opening of the Mouth)³ and the *wpt-r* (Opening of the Mouth), respectively, suggests

1. For a survey of the history of the exegesis of Gen 1: 26–27, see C. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Continental Commentary* (trans. J. J. Scullion; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994) 147–58; and K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (vol. 3/1; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958) 192–206. See also G. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (WBC 1; Waco, TX: Word, 1987) 29–34; G. Jönsson, *The Image of God: Gen 1:26–28 in a Century of Old Testament Research* (Lund: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1988); D. J. A. Clines, "The Image of God in Man," *TB* 19 (1968) 54–61, which also refers to J. J. Stamm, "Die Imago-Lehre von Karl Barth und die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft," in *Antwort: Festschrift K. Barth* (ed. E. Wolf et al.: Zollikon-Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1956) 84–98; and A. A. Hoekema, *Created in God's Image* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986) 33–65.

2. I will argue in §2.3.3 that the first creation account ends in Gen 2:3 and the Eden story begins in Gen 2:5.

3. The phrase *mīs pī pīt pī* is the name given to the ritual in its Nineveh version. For a full bibliography on the Washing of the Mouth and the Opening of the Mouth rituals,

that the answer may be, surprisingly, no. That is, as will be discussed in detail in chapter 4 (§4.7), Gen 2:5–3:24 seems to describe the creation of the first man in terms reminiscent of the creation of a divine image in the *mis pi pit pi* and the *wpt-r* rituals. There are parallels among them in content, overall progression, and, to some extent, purpose, suggesting that, despite the absence of the terms *šelem* and *dāmūt*, Gen 2:5–3:24 implicitly presents the idea that the first man was, on some level, an “image of God.”⁴ This assertion raises two additional issues that I will also address. First, what is the nature of the relationship between the biblical and the comparative material? Is the Eden story historically related to the washing of the mouth and the opening of the mouth rituals, or do the parallels suggest only a typological connection? Second, if the Eden story does portray the first man as an “image,” how does this affect our understanding of the nature of the relationship between Gen 1:1–2:3 and Gen 2:5–3:24?

One additional feature will guide my inquiry into the creation of humanity in Gen 1:26–27. In Gen 1:26, 28, the man and the woman are commanded to subdue (*kbš*) the earth and to exercise dominion (*rdh*) over all living creatures. The verb *rdh* is used elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible to describe the dominion of the king,⁵ and both *rdh* and *kbš* reflect similar terminology used in the court parlance of Egypt and Babylon to describe the king’s royal duties.⁶ J. Hehn’s early (1915) recognition that *šelem* and *dāmūt* in Gen 1:26–27 reflect the royal ideology of the ancient Near East in which the king was identified as a divine image has been largely accepted by biblical scholars. These terms, however, do not belong exclusively to the lexicon of divine and royal representation and/or manifestation. As Gen 5:1–3 makes clear, they also express kinship, specifically, the relationship between father and son:

This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created human-kind, in the likeness of God (*bidmūt ’ēlōhīm*) he made him. Male and

see C. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia: The Mesopotamian Mis Pi Ritual* (Helsinki: University of Helsinki Press, 2001) 27–29, 248–59. Whether or not these were two distinct rituals will be discussed below in §1.4 and in chapter 3. An updated, revised edition of the *mis pi pit pi* texts is now available online: <https://sites.google.com/a/siena.edu/mis-pi/>

4. *First man*: I am not suggesting that in Gen 2 the woman is somehow inferior. I am simply recognizing that in Gen 2 the creation of the man, specifically, is presented in terms reminiscent of cult statue manufacture. That the woman is indeed created in the image of and according to the likeness of God is *explicit* in Gen 1:26–27. Any interpretation of the creation of woman in Gen 2:5–3:24 must take Gen 1:1–2:3, and specifically Gen 1:26–27, into account. “*Image of God*”: Although the *mis pi pit pi* texts were applied specifically to divine images, there is sufficient evidence from Mesopotamia to suggest that royal images underwent a similar process of creation, animation and installation. See I. Winter, “Idols of the King: Royal Images as Recipients of Ritual Action in Ancient Mesopotamia,” *JRS* 6 (1992) 13–42.

5. 1 Kgs 5:4; Isa 14:6; Ezek 34:4; Ps 8:6, 72:8, 110:2.

6. H. Wildberger, “Das Abbild Gottes. Gen I, 26–30,” *TZ* 21 (1965) 481–83. See also C. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 158–59.

female he created them, and he blessed them and named them *ʾādām* when they were created. When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered (a son) in his own likeness, after his image (*wayyôled bidmûtô kašalmô*), and named him Seth.

The fact that this *tôladôt* notice echoes the language of Gen 1:26–27 suggests that the description of Seth functions, at least in part, as an interpretive key to understanding the creation of male and female *bašelem ʾēlōhīm*. That is, the author of Gen 1:1–2:3 may have chosen *šelem* and *dāmût* not only because these terms have royal and cultic overtones but because they also convey a filial relationship.⁷

In sum, I will address one primary question and three subsidiary questions. First, I am interested in determining what the author intended when he described humans in Gen 1:26–27 as created in the image and according to the likeness of Elohim. It is my contention that the terms are used as double entendres. The author seems to invite the comparison of humans to a cult statue.⁸ However, *šelem* and *dāmût* also suggest that Gen 1:26–27 defines the divine-human relationship in terms of sonship. To be sure, *image* and *likeness* are not exclusively filial terms. Their semantic range is much broader, as discussed in §4.3. However, the context of Gen 1:1–2:3 (see §4.5 below) and the use of image and likeness language in a few key texts from ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia to denote a filial relationship (see §4.5.3) suggests that *šelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:1–2:3 functioned in at least two ways: to compare humanity to (and to contrast them with) cult statues and to present the divine-human relationship in terms of kinship, specifically as one of sonship.

Second, I will attempt to show that, by incorporating selected aspects of divine statue animation rituals into the story of human creation, Gen 2:5–

7. If this is correct, it would not be surprising that the relationship between the two *šalāmīm*, male (*zākār*) and female (*naqēbāh*), would also be defined in familial terms. In Gen 2:23, the woman is described as the man's "bone (*ʿešem*) and flesh (*bāšār*).⁹ That is, having been created from Adam's very body, Eve is his biological kin. Thus, both Genesis 1 and 2 would define the two primary human relationships, namely, the divine-human relationship and the relationship of husband and wife, in kinship terms. In Genesis 1, humans are introduced as members of God's royal family, and this presentation implies that humans and God are, on some level, "kin."

8. To be certain, I am not suggesting that Gen 1:26–27 defines humanity as a physical manifestation of Elohim in the same way that a divine statue in Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt was considered to manifest the divine. I am proposing, rather, that the author's use of *šelem* alludes to a divine statue, *only to redefine the term*. In other words, according to Genesis 1, a genuine *šelem* is what Elohim created on the sixth day: *ʾādām*, male and female. Although humans could be referred to as a "cult image" in the sense that, according to Gen 1:1–2:3 and 2:5–3:24, they were designed to operate in a cultic environment, specifically the world (Gen 1:1–2:3) and the garden of Eden (Gen 2:5–3:24), I will avoid the term in reference to the biblical accounts of human creation. When referring to statues of gods from Mesopotamia and Egypt, which were thought to embody the deity and were thus understood as physical manifestations of the divine itself, I will use "divine image" or "divine statue."

3:24, despite the obvious differences between it and Gen 1:1–2:3, likewise presents humanity as created *bāṣelem ʿēlōhīm*. Third, the relationship between Gen 2:5–3:24 and divine statue animation rituals raises anew several questions concerning the relationship between Gen 1:1–2:3 and Gen 2:5–24 that I will address. Do they simply represent two different traditions about human creation in ancient Israel? Was Gen 2:4b–3:24 written to counter the position expressed in Gen 1:1–2:4a, or does it in some way offer an explanation of the opaque *bāṣelem ʿēlōhīm* in Gen 1:27? Do any features of Gen 1:1–2:4a and 2:4b–3:24 suggest that the latter is a sequel to God’s creation of the universe in Gen 1:1–2:4a rather than a distinct account of human origins? Conversely, could the use of *ṣelem* and *dāmūt* in Gen 1:26–27 be an attempt by the final redactor of Genesis to make explicit the subtle references to humanity’s status as an image of God in Gen 2:5–3:24? Fourth, because this work involves the comparison of Gen 1:26–27 and Gen 2:5–3:24 to extrabiblical material from Egypt and Mesopotamia, it will contribute more broadly to two significant areas of discussion in biblical studies: the relevance of ancient Near Eastern materials for biblical interpretation and the nature of the comparative task itself.

1.2. Justification for the Present Study

For more than 2,000 years, an enormous amount of exegetical energy has been spent on the interpretation of Genesis 1–3, and one may thus ask whether yet another study of the biblical accounts of human creation is warranted. The present inquiry is justified by the fact that although portions of the Mesopotamian mouth-washing and mouth-opening ritual were published as early as 1901,⁹ a complete edition of the *mīs pī pīt pī* and its associated incantations, including transliteration, translation, and commentary, appeared only in 2001.¹⁰ Furthermore, although several scholars have discussed possible Egyptian parallels to the biblical creation accounts,¹¹ no one has suggested that the Egyptian *wpt-r* may have any bearing on our understanding of the creation of humans in Gen 2:5–3:24. The few scholars who have noted a connection between the Eden story and the *mīs pī pīt pī*, including A. Schüle, who has developed this idea in more detail, have not taken the Egyptian mouth-opening ritual into account.¹² Therefore, this

9. H. Zimmern, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Babylonischen Religion* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1901).

10. See “Review of Previous Scholarship on the Mesopotamian *mīs pī pīt pī* and the Bible,” in §1.6. The complete ritual, including the associated incantations, was published in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*.

11. See “Review of Previous Scholarship on Genesis 1–3 and the Egyptian Creation Accounts,” in §1.5.

12. A. Schüle, “Made in the ‘Image of God’: The Concepts of Divine Images in Gen 1–3,” *ZAW* 117 (2005) 1–20. I first saw a possible connection with the Egyptian ritual in 1997 while writing a paper for a Genesis exegesis course taught by Prof. Jon D. Levenson at Harvard University. With my professors’ permission, I then developed the topic further

study will not only present new information on the possible relationship between the Mesopotamian *mīs pī pīt pī* and the Eden story, and hence strengthen the argument that the biblical author may have been familiar with these rituals and incorporated selected aspects of them into his account of human creation in order to redefine *šelem* and the divine-human relationship, but it will also discuss the potential relationship between the Egyptian *wpt-r* and the creation of Adam in Gen 2:5–3:24.

Moreover, although many scholars have noted the relevance of *šelem* and *dāmūt* in Gen 5:1–3 for interpreting the same terms in Gen 1:26–27, I will offer additional evidence from three extrabiblical texts, as noted above, that support the notion that the author of Genesis 1 may have used *šelem* and *dāmūt* not only to draw a comparison between humanity and a divine statue but to define the divine-human relationship as one of royal sonship.

1.3. Justification for the Use of Comparative Material Generally and for the Choice of the Particular Comparative Materials Used in This Study

It is now well known and widely accepted in biblical scholarship that the Hebrew Bible cannot be fully understood without taking into consideration both the broader traditions of the ancient Near East and the specific historical contexts within which the Bible was composed. From the period of Israel's emergence to the Babylonian exile and return, the archaeological record and the biblical texts themselves witness Israel's interactions with its neighbors, as well as the influence of those neighbors on Israelite traditions and culture. Thus, comparative work is fundamental to biblical studies. Two types of comparison may be involved: typological and historical. In a typological study, the entities being compared are not presumed to be historically related and may, in fact, be distant both geographically and chronologically from one another.¹³ The underlying assumption in a

in a seminar co-taught by Peter Machinist and Irene Winter. At the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in 1999, I presented this research, under my former surname, Beckerleg, in a paper entitled "The Creation, Animation, and Installation of Adam in Genesis 2:7–25," the abstract for which is available in *AAR/SBL Abstracts 1999* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999). The paper is referred to in J. R. Middleton, *The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2005) 129 n. 133; A. LaCocque, *The Trial of Innocence: Adam, Eve, and the Yahwist* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2006) 257 n. 35; G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God* (New Studies in Biblical Theology 17; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004) 70 n. 97, 89; idem, *We Become What We Worship: A Biblical Theology of Idolatry* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008) 131 n. 26, 132 n. 28; J. S. DeRouchie, "Making the Ten Count: Reflections on the Lasting Message of the Decalogue," in *For Our Good Always: Studies on the Message and Influence of Deuteronomy in Honor of Daniel I. Block*. (ed. J. S. DeRouchie, J. Gile, and K. J. Turner; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013) 417 n. 5. See also "Review of Previous Scholarship on the Mesopotamian *mīs pī pīt pī* and the Bible," in §1.6.

13. M. Malul, *The Comparative Method in Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical Legal Studies* (Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1990) 14.

typological study is that similarities between the entities can be explained by common human experience. Thus, when comparing two items, the gaps in our understanding of A may be filled in by the extant portions of B—what Winter refers to as “amplification through analogy.”¹⁴ For example, through a typological comparison of spouted vessels found in the Royal Cemetery at Ur with similar vessels used in Hindu ritual, Winter has demonstrated that the former were not simply used for pouring liquid but were multifunctional.¹⁵ She comments:

The utility of a spouted vessel for pouring is obvious, and based on the contemporary images preserved from Mesopotamia, the excavator of the Royal Cemetery had initially identified this vessel with ritual libation. What the Indian case offered was a methodological caution that the range of *depiction* might not represent the entire range of *usage*; and indeed, when one returns to the Mesopotamian record, there turns out to be hitherto unexamined evidence that such vessels also had a range of uses in ancient times, including handwashing, and the filling of cups at ritual banquets.¹⁶

Winter was also able to demonstrate that the many conch shells found in the same cemetery previously interpreted as lamps were more likely used, as are their Hindu counterparts today, for pouring liquid.¹⁷ Winter then recognized that the vessel represented in a scene on one of the large lyres found in the Ur tombs was a conch shell into which liquid would have been dispensed from the larger vessel accompanying it in the scene.¹⁸ The observation of living practice thus enabled her to correct earlier interpretations of the excavated material and to find internal corroboration of her thesis.¹⁹

14. I. Winter, “Opening the Eyes and Opening the Mouth: the Utility of Comparing Images in Worship in India and the Ancient Near East,” in *Ethnography and Personhood: Notes from the Field* (ed. M. W. Meister; New Delhi: Rawat, 2000) 133.

15. Winter, “Opening the Eyes.”

16. *Ibid.*, 142.

17. *Ibid.*, 142–43.

18. *Ibid.*, 143.

19. *Ibid.*, 145. See also I. Winter, “Radiance as an Aesthetic Value in the Art of Mesopotamia (with Some Indian Parallels),” in *Art: The Integral Vision: A Volume of Essays in Felicitation of Kapila Vatsyayan* (ed. S. C. Malik, B. N. Saraswati, and M. Khanna; New Delhi: D. K. Printworld, 1994) 123–32. Her comparative work on Mesopotamian practice and living Hindu ritual has provided a much greater understanding of what the priests performing the *mīs pī* and *pīt pī* may have experienced. She writes,

What my own field work in India and with the Hindu community in the United States had demonstrated is that . . . while one can certainly take such once-consecrated works out of their current museum-context and re-place them into their respective temples as part of a mental exercise, the actual *experience* of the Hindu image in worship provides a far greater sense of an active cult: complete with garments, ornaments, ritual vessels, incense (which we know to have been part of Mesopotamian cult activity), music, flowers—the providers of visual, olfactory, audi-

A similar typological comparison between the creation of Adam in Gen 2:5–3:24, and the consecration rituals for divine images in Buddhism and Hinduism could prove equally fruitful. In certain Buddhist traditions, the opening of the eyes is considered the moment at which the image becomes the god,²⁰ recalling the serpent's promise in Gen 3:5 that "when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like Elohim" (*bəyôm 'ākolkem mimmennû wənipqəhû 'ênêkem wihyîtem kē'lōhîm*). However, I have chosen to limit the comparative material to divine statue animation texts from cultures that lie within the same "historic stream,"²¹ that is, within geographic, chronological, and, to some extent, cultural proximity to ancient Israel. This does not mean, however, that Gen 2:5–3:24, the *mīs pî pî pî* and *wpt-r* are necessarily historically related. As Weinfeld has demonstrated in his study of Job and its Mesopotamian parallels, even entities from within the same cultural milieu can be typologically rather than genetically linked.²²

By definition, a historical comparison presumes a genetic connection or at least a common tradition among the entities being compared.²³ It also requires chronological and geographic proximity of the cultures within which the entities under comparison emerge. Ample opportunity for the exchange of the ideas must also be demonstrated.²⁴ One such potential genetic relationship between Isaiah 44 and the *mīs pî pî pî* has been suggested by M. Dick. Citing the presence of two Akkadian loanwords for specific types of trees used for the creation of a divine statue, *'ōren* (Isa 44:14, for

tory, tactile, even gustatory sensation. It is my point that, pursued with rigor, such analogical situations *can* serve the past, offering what Carl Nylander feared would always elude the archaeologist: the music to the flute, the grief to the grave (1969, 3). In the present case, what the cross-cultural comparison affords is a window into the sensory surround, at both artifactual and experiential levels, that would have animated Mesopotamian ritual performance as components of a living tradition." ("Opening the Eyes," 154)

20. See D. K. Swearer, *Becoming the Buddha: The Ritual of Image Consecration in Thailand* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); S. J. Tambiah, *The Buddhist Saints of the Forest and the Cult of Amulets: A Study in Charisma, Hagiography, Sectarianism, and Millennial Buddhism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) 243, 251, 252, 255–56, and 381 n. 7; K. Wells, *Thai Buddhism: Its Rites and Activities* (New York: AMS, 1960) 128; and R. Gombrich, "The Consecration of a Buddhist Image," *JAS* 26 (1966–67) 24–25, 28–29, 36.

21. On this phrase see M. J. Herskovits, "Editorial," *CSSH* 1 (1958–59) 129–48, esp. p. 141; and S. Talmon, "The 'Comparative Method' in Biblical Interpretation," in *Essential Papers on Israel and the Ancient Near East* (ed. Frederick E. Greenspahn; New York: New York University Press, 1991) 381–417, esp. p. 386 and n. 13.

22. M. Weinfeld, "Job and Its Mesopotamian Parallels: A Typological Analysis," in *Text and Context: Old Testament and Semitic Studies for F. C. Fensham* (ed. W. Claassen; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988) 217–26. See also Malul, *The Comparative Method*, 54–58.

23. See *ibid.*, 13, and Weinfeld's study on the laws of the goring ox on pp. 113–52, where he concludes that the biblical laws of the goring ox were dependent, and perhaps even directly dependent, on Mesopotamian sources.

24. *Ibid.*, 99–112.

Akkadian *erenu*) and *mesukkan* (Isa 40:20, for Akkadian *musukkannu*), Dick concludes that Second Isaiah must have had “*personal knowledge* of Babylonian cult images and their dedication ceremonies,”²⁵ that is, the Washing of the Mouth and Opening of the Mouth rituals. The likelihood of this relationship is increased by the presence of four other possible allusions to the Washing of the Mouth and the Opening of the Mouth in Isaiah 44 that Dick overlooked.

1. Isaiah 44:11

The prophet’s familiarity with the Washing of the Mouth and the Opening of the Mouth rituals may be indicated by his comment in Isa 44:11, “the craftsmen, they are only human” (*wəḥārāšim hēmmāh mē’ādām*). His emphasis on the role of *human* craftsmen, *hēmmāh mē’ādām*, may be an explicit rejection of the assertion in the *mīs pī* that the god (*ilu*) was created by a team of *divine* artisans.²⁶

2. Isaiah 44:15, 17

The same sentiment is expressed in Isa 44:15, 17, where, three times, the prophet mockingly refers to the divine statue as a “god” (*’ēl*). Note the parallelism in Isa 44:15:

<i>yip’al</i>	<i>’ēl</i>	<i>wayyīštāḥû</i>
He makes	a god	and bows down,
<i>’āsāhû</i>	<i>pesel</i>	<i>wayyisgād lāmô</i>
He makes	an idol	and falls down before it.

By defining the *’ēl* as a *pesel*, a derogatory term used consistently throughout the Hebrew Bible as a name for an abominable metal or wooden image,²⁷ the prophet denies any legitimacy, life, or efficacy to the divine image, despite the fact that it has undergone an activation process, a procedure with which Isaiah was apparently familiar (as Dick argues and as I demonstrate further below in the next two sections). In short, he is mocking the identification of a divine statue with a god, and, either directly or indirectly, the mouth-washing ritual’s claim that the *šalmu* is or becomes an *ilu*.

3. Isaiah 44:14

Perhaps the strongest indication of Isaiah’s knowledge of the *mīs pī pīt pī* appears in v. 14, where he describes the work of the human craftsman who “cuts down for himself cedars (*’ārāzīm*), or he takes a cypress tree (*tirzāh*) or an oak (*’allôn*) and makes it firm/strengthens it among the trees of the forest (*ba’āṣê yā’ar*). He plants a cedar (*’ōren*) and rain makes it grow”

25. M. Dick, “Worshipping Idols: What Isaiah Didn’t Know,” *BR* 18 (2002) 36, my emphasis.

26. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 65 lines 173–75, 179–86.

27. See Exod 20:4; Deut 4:16; 2 Kgs 21:7; Jer 10:14, 51:17; Hab 2:18; and Ps 97:7.

(*wagešem yaḡaddēl*).” As noted above, Dick recognized that the term *’ōren*, a *hapax legomenon* in Biblical Hebrew, likely reflects Akkadian *erenu*, “cedar.” However, this is not the only item in v. 14 that suggests the author’s awareness of the *mīs pī pīt pī*. His references to making the tree firm/strengthening it (*’mš*), to rain as the agent which causes the tree to grow, and to the human craftsman who cuts down the tree, may reveal his familiarity with the content of one of the ritual’s accompanying incantations, ST 199, “As you come out/grow in greatness from the forest.”²⁸ To be sure, in ST 199 it is not the rain that makes the tree grow, as in Isa 44:14 (*gešem yaḡaddēl*), but the god Enki who waters the tree, causing it to drink the pure water of the Apsū.²⁹ It is not the human craftsman who chops down the tree, as in Isa 44:14, but the god Ninildu, who “touches” the tree with his great axe, his fine chisel, and his pure saw.³⁰ By identifying the *rain* as the agent who waters the tree and the *human* craftsman as the one who cuts it down, Isaiah may be denying the involvement of and probably, in light of Isa 44:6–8, the existence of the gods Enki and Ninildu.

4. *Isaiah 44:18*

The reference to the blind and ignorant craftsmen in Isa 44:18 is the final indication in Isaiah 44 that the prophet likely had firsthand knowledge specifically of the *pīt pī* portion of the ritual. Concerning the human craftsmen, he states:

They do not know, nor do they discern, for he (Yahweh) has smeared over their eyes so they cannot see (*kī taḥ mēra’ōt ’ēnēhem*), their hearts so they cannot understand (*mēhaškīl libbōtām*).

In the Opening of the Mouth ritual, the statue’s sensory organs are animated, enabling it to see, hear, smell, speak, breath, and move about as a living being. The opening of the eyes is even named specifically in the Babylon version,³¹ and the fact that the image is placed facing the sunrise in the Nineveh version suggests a similar emphasis on the animation of the eyes.³² By claiming that the “idol” makers’ eyes have been shut and they are therefore blind, and that their minds are dumb and they are, consequently, without understanding, *the prophet applies the activation of the sensory organs of the divine image to the craftsmen themselves, only in reverse*. The

28. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 114–21 esp. lines 13–40.

29. *Ibid.*, 116 and 120 line 31.

30. *Ibid.*, 116 and 120 lines 33–35.

31. *Ibid.*, 76 line 53, 80 line 53. See also A. Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth: The Consecration of Divine Images in Mesopotamia,” in *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (ed. K. van der Toorn; Leuven: Peeters, 1997) 66–67 with n. 82.

32. *Ibid.*, 59 n. 82, 56, and 56 n. 49; idem, *Die Theologie der Bilder: Herstellung und Einweihung von Kultbildern in Mesopotamien und die alttestamentliche Bilderpolemik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998) 221.

idol-makers, as Pss 115:8 and 135:18 predict, *have become like their idols*—having eyes but unable to see.³³ Thus, in agreement with Dick, I conclude that there is compelling evidence to suggest a genetic relationship between Isaiah 44 and the *mis pî pî pî pî*. The prophet was not simply familiar with the Washing of the Mouth and Opening of the Mouth on a superficial level.³⁴ Rather, he seems to have been well acquainted with the ritual's claims and the methods of production it describes. That is, he demonstrates knowledge not only of the physical manufacture of divine images but of the Washing of the Mouth and the Opening of the Mouth rituals themselves by which the physical images were consecrated and activated. He then used this knowledge to repudiate the validity of the *mis pî pî pî pî* and its claims.³⁵

Does Gen 2:5–3:24, like Isa 44, reflect a familiarity with the *mis pî pî pî pî* ritual from Mesopotamia and/or the *wpt-r* from ancient Egypt? Is there a historical relationship among them, or do the similarities between Gen 2:5–3:24, on the one hand, and the *mis pî pî pî pî* and *wpt-r*, on the other, reflect, rather, a typological relationship? The evidence for a historical connection, which will be reviewed in chapter 4, is suggestive. However, even if a genetic relationship between Gen 2:5–3:24 and the mouth-washing and mouth-opening ceremonies cannot be demonstrated, the typological analogies, can they be shown, will themselves be significant.

1.4. Introduction of Comparative Material

The production of divine images is nearly always accompanied by rituals of consecration. Whether we examine such rituals in ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia or Greece, or similar rites in modern Buddhism and Hindu India,³⁶ a pattern emerges: the consecration of an image effects a change

33. See Pss 115:5–8 and 135:15–18.

34. Contra Dick, "Worshipping Idols."

35. This was the independent conclusion of N. Levtow, *Images of Others: Iconic Politics in Ancient Israel* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008) 100. See also J. Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth: Divine Presence and Absence in the Book of Ezekiel* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000) 134, 137 n. 138, 197, where the author argues for a historical connection between Ezek 36–37 and the *mis pî*.

36. *Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, or Greece*: A. A. Donohue, *Xoana and the Origins of Greek Sculpture* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988); E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1956) 291–95; I. Romano, "Early Greek Cult Images and Cult Practices," in *Early Greek Cult Practice: Proceedings of the Fifth International Symposium at the Swedish Institute at Athens, 26–29 June, 1986* (ed. R. Hagg, N. Marinatos and G. C. Nordquist; Stockholm: Paul Åström, 1988) 127–33; W. Burkert, *Greek Religion* (trans. J. Raffan; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985) 88–92; A. Schnapp, "Are Images Animated? The Psychology of Statues in Ancient Greece," in *The Ancient Mind: Elements of Cognitive Archaeology* (ed. Colin Renfrew and Ezra B. W. Zubrow; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 40–44; and idem, "Why Did the Greeks Need Images?" in *Proceedings of the 3rd Symposium on Ancient Greek and Related Pottery: Copenhagen August 31–September 4 1987* (ed. J. Christiansen and T. Melander; Copenhagen: Thorvaldsens Museum, 1988) 566–74.

in its status from profane to sacred. Consecration “makes it work, or at the very least, effects a change in the way it works.”³⁷ Freedberg comments, “Consecration is never an empty ceremony. It involves at least one process—like washing, anointing, crowning, or blessing—that brings about an intended change in the sacred status of an image.”³⁸ Certainly, there are significant differences among the various traditions, but the consecration rituals share a common goal: to bring the image to life so that it can function properly within its ritual context.

In Mesopotamia, the creation, animation and consecration of a divine image were achieved through two rituals known to us by their Babylonian titles, the *mīs pī* (“washing of the mouth”) and *pīt pī* (“opening of the mouth”). The former, attested as early as the late 3rd millennium, was a ceremony of purification performed on animate and inanimate objects to prepare them for cultic use.³⁹ The *pīt pī*, which would have been preceded by the *mīs pī*, was apparently reserved exclusively for inanimate objects.⁴⁰ It functioned as the means by which the recipient was brought to life. When applied specifically to a divine (or royal) statue, the *pīt pī* was thought to animate the statue’s sensory organs and limbs, enabling it to consume offerings, smell incense, and move freely.⁴¹ Once the mouth washing and opening were complete, the statue was considered a fully-functioning, living manifestation of the divine.⁴²

Modern Buddhism: See Tambiah, *The Buddhist Saints*; Wells, *Thai Buddhism*, 122–30; R. Knox, *An Historical Relation of Ceylon* (2nd ed.; Dehiwala: Prakasakayo, 1966); Gombrich, “The Consecration,” 23–36; W. Crooke, “Images and Idols (Indian),” *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. 7: *Hymns—Liberty* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1914) 142–46; A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Mediaeval Sinhalese Art* (Broad Campden: Essex, 1908) 70–75; A. LeClère, *Cambridge: Fêtes Civiles et Religieuses* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1916) 144–50.

Hindu India: See R. H. Davis, *Lives of Indian Images* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), esp. chap. 2; J. Waghorne, “The Divine Image in Contemporary South India: The Renaissance of a Once Maligned Tradition,” in *Born in Heaven Made on Earth: The Making of the Cult Image in the Ancient Near East* (ed. Michael B. Dick; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999) 211–43; J. Preston, “Creation of the Sacred Image: Apotheosis and Destruction in Hinduism,” in *Gods of Flesh, Gods of Stone: The Embodiment of Divinity in India* (ed. J. P. Waghorne and N. Cutler in association with B. Narayanan; New York: Columbia University Press, 1996) 9–30, 172–73; D. Eck, *Darśan: Seeing the Divine Image in India* (Chambersburg, PA: Anima, 1981) 28–41; Winter, “Radiance”; idem, “Opening the Eyes,” 129–62.

37. D. Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989) 83.

38. *Ibid.*, 83.

39. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 10–13, 16; Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 187.

40. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 13–14; Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth,” 45.

41. “This statue cannot smell incense without the ‘Opening of the Mouth’ ceremony. It cannot eat food nor drink water” (Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 140–41, 151 lines 70–71).

42. See Winter, “Idols of the King,” 14; T. Jacobsen, “The Graven Image” in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (ed. P. Hanson et al.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987) 16–18; Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth,” 46; Walker and Dick, *The Induction*,

As noted previously, the ancient Egyptians also performed a ritual for the creation and animation of temple statues, as well as for the re-creation and re-animation of a deceased human or animal in various forms. The ritual, "Performing the Opening of the Mouth in the Workshop for the Statue (*tut*) of N," was also known as the "Opening of the Mouth" (*wpt-r* and *wn-r*) or "Opening of the Mouth and the Eyes."⁴³ Over the course of its lengthy history, which extends from the Old Kingdom through the Late Period, the ritual was applied to a variety of inanimate objects, evidence which is preserved with respect to royal and divine statues, human mummies and mummified Apis bulls, anthropoid sarcophagi, ushabtis, heart scarabs, amulets, figurines, a royal cartouche, a temple and its reliefs, the prow of a boat, and, in Late Greco-Roman Egypt, a magical ring.⁴⁴ The purpose of the Egyptian ritual was to purify and animate the object, making it fit for cultic use. When applied to statues of the dead and human mummies, the *wpt-r* was thought to reanimate the recipient and restore its sensory organs so that it could consume the offerings of food and drink needed as sustenance in the afterlife.⁴⁵

Although a separate mouth-opening ritual for divine statues existed in ancient Egypt, the texts have regrettably not survived. Aside from the few historical references mentioned above, nearly all of the evidence for the

6–7; and S. Herring, *Divine Substitution: Humanity as the Manifestation of Deity in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013) 25–26, 47–48.

43. For the ritual, see E. Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual* (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz, 1960) 2:34. "N" stood for the name of the recipient. When the ritual was performed, the priest would substitute the appropriate name in place of "N." For other names for the ritual, see D. Lorton, "The Theology of Cult Statues in Ancient Egypt," in *Born in Heaven Made on Earth: The Making of the Cult Image in the Ancient Near East* (ed. M. Dick; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999) 147.

44. *Apis bulls*: E. Chassinat, "Textes Provenant du Sérapéum de Memphis," *Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes* 21 (1899) 72; W. Spiegelberg, "Ein Bruchstück des Bestattungsrituals der Apistiere," *ZÄS* 56 (1920) 1–33; and Otto, *Das Ägyptische*, 2:30. *Anthropoid sarcophagi*: Ibid., 2:26–27. *Heart scarabs*: N. Davies and A. H. Gardiner, *The Tomb of Amenemhat* (London: Egyptian Exploration Fund, 1915) 112–13, 117. *Amulets*: Lorton, "The Theology," 148; F. Lexa, *La magie dans l'Égypte antique* (Paris: Geuthner, 1925) 2:53. *Figurines*: A. Blackman, "The Rite of Opening the Mouth in Ancient Egypt and Babylonia," *JEA* 10 (1924) 53, 57; Otto, *Das Ägyptische*, 2:26–27; Lexa, *La magie*, 2:53. *Cartouche*: In the tomb of Queen Tauseret (The Valley of the Kings 14), as cited in R. Finnestad, "The Meaning and Purpose of Opening the Mouth in Mortuary Contexts," *Numen* 25 (1978) 119 n. 6; and in S. Bjerke, "Remarks on the Egyptian Ritual of Opening the Mouth and Its Interpretation," *Numen* 12/3 (1965) 204. *Temple*: M. Rochemonteix and E. Chassinat, *Le temple d'Edfou* (vol. 4; Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, 1984); and A. Blackman and H. Fairman, "The Consecration of an Egyptian Temple according to the Use of Edfu II," *JEA* 32 (1946) 75–76. *Boat*: J. Goyon, *Rituels funéraires de l'ancienne Egypte: Le rituel de l'embaumement, le rituel de l'ouverture de la bouche, les livres des respirations* (Paris: du Derf, 1972) 90 n. 1. *Ring*: I. Moyer and J. Dieleman, "Miniaturization and the Opening of the Mouth in a Greek Magical Text (PGM XII.270–350)," *JANES* 3 (2003) 47–72.

45. A. Roth, "Opening of the Mouth," in *The Ancient Gods Speak: A Guide to Egyptian Religion* (ed. D. Redford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) 295.

wpt-r comes from mortuary contexts. Thus, it is unclear whether the ritual originated in Egypt with temple statues and then, very early, passed into the funerary realm, or whether it began as a means to re-animate the dead and was then adapted to the creation of temple statues. As D. Lorton notes, however, it is also possible that a common problem, that of inert matter in need of vivification, whether a temple statue, a mummy, or a statue of the deceased, received a common solution, the Opening of the Mouth.⁴⁶ Whatever its origins in Egypt, and despite the distinct funerary context of the Egyptian evidence, there are sufficient similarities between the creation and animation of Adam in Gen 2:5–3:24 and the re-creation and re-animation of the deceased in the Egyptian *wpt-r* to warrant the inclusion of this material in the present study. In the process, I will avoid an atomistic approach that compares only lists of individual traits detached from their contexts, a method that often results in drawing naïve and superficial parallels between the sources and, as a result, mistakes typological similarities for historical connections (or the reverse) or worse, manufactures parallels where there are none. Rather, keeping the distinctions between typological and historical comparisons in mind, I will seek to understand the Egyptian *wpt-r*, the Mesopotamian *mis pi pit pi*, and Gen 2:5–3:24 on their own, in their own *Sitz im Leben*, before turning to a comparative study of the three sources. Furthermore, I am interested not only in similarities between the nonbiblical and biblical texts but also in selected differences.⁴⁷ Thus, I will focus not only on parallels between Gen 2:5–3:24 and the comparative material but also on the features of the Eden story where the biblical author seems to be drawing a sharp distinction between his understanding of “image” and that expressed in the Egyptian *wpt-r* and the Mesopotamian *mis pi pit pi*.

1.5. Review of Previous Scholarship on Genesis 1–3 and the Egyptian Creation Accounts

Despite the heavy scholarly emphasis during much of the 20th century on the possible Mesopotamian background of Genesis 1–3, several Egyptologists noted potential Egyptian connections with the biblical creation stories. A. H. Sayce was among the first to suggest a correspondence between the cosmogonies of Hermopolis and Genesis 1, both of which mention the formless deep, the divine breath moving over the waters, the creation of light, and the emergence of the hill or firmament in the midst of the waters.⁴⁸ He was followed by R. Williams, who noted the similarities

46. Lorton, “The Theology,” 150.

47. “Selected differences” refers, as stated above, to those features of the Eden story where the biblical author seems to be drawing a sharp distinction between his understanding of “image” and that expressed in the Egyptian *wpt-r* and the Mesopotamian *mis pi pit pi*. See §§4.6.3–4.7.6, below.

48. A. Sayce, “The Egyptian Background of Genesis 1,” in *Studies Presented to F. L. Griffith* (ed. S. Glanville; London: Oxford University Press, 1932) 419–23. He refers to the correspondence as “too close to be fortuitous” (p. 422).

between Gen 2:7, where Yahweh animates Adam by breathing into his nostrils, and the 14–13th century B.C.E. descriptions of the pharaoh and the gods, Ptah and Re, as bringing the people to life by breathing into their nostrils.⁴⁹ R. Kilian, building on the work of Sayce and J. A. Wilson,⁵⁰ argued that *tōhû wābōhû*, *hōsēk*, *tāhōm* and the *rūaḥ* *ʾēlōhīm* in Gen 1:2 are the Hebrew version of the four cosmic forces in the Hermopolis cosmogony. These forces, along with their consorts, were known as “the chaos gods.”⁵¹ Finally, J. Hoffmeier has also noted several similarities between Gen 1–2 and Egyptian creation accounts: the conceptual parallel between *bārēʾšīt* in Gen 1:1, the root of which is *rōš*, “head,” and the Egyptian term denoting the time of creation, *sp tpy*, whose root, *tp*, also means “head,” to mark the beginning of divine creative activity, creation by divine fiat, and the notion, in both Genesis 1 and Egyptian mythology, that the celestial vault was constructed using a metal barrier.⁵² Hoffmeier also discusses Gen 1:26–27 in light of the *Instructions of Merikare* (Tenth Dynasty), in which humans are referred to as the images (*snnw*) of the creator god. He comments:

Here we see Re placing the breath into the nostrils of men, but of even greater significance is that in Merikare man is described as the *snnw* of the creator-god. *Snnw* is derived from the word meaning “second,” hence “likeness, image” and it is frequently written with a statue for the determinative . . . as in Papyrus Carlsberg VI of Merikare.⁵³

Despite the comparative work that has been done thus far on Gen 1–3 and Egyptian creation myths, however, no one has suggested that, like the Mesopotamian *mīs pī pīt pī*, the Egyptian mouth-opening ritual may also be germane to our understanding of the creation of humanity in Gen 1:26–27 and 2:5–3:24. I will test this idea in chapter 4.

49. R. Williams, “Some Egyptianisms in the Old Testament,” in *Studies in Honor of John A. Wilson’s 70th Birthday* (ed. E. Hauser; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969) 93–94. On the idea that the deity animating an image via breathing into its nostrils is an Egyptianism, J. Hoffmeier comments, “While this view of the creation of man in Egyptian literature is only one among several, it comes very close to the description found in Gen. 2:7. We are led to the conclusion that this Egyptian view, which spans the time from the Old Kingdom to the end of the New Kingdom, is closer to the Hebrew tradition than the Hebrew is to the Babylonian” (“Some Thoughts on Genesis 1 and 2 and Egyptian Cosmology,” *JANES* 15 [1983] 48). See also Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 203.

50. J. Wilson, “The Nature of the Universe,” in *Before Philosophy* (ed. H. Frankfort et al.; Baltimore: Penguin, 1946) 61. See also J. Hoffmeier, “Some Thoughts on Genesis 1 and 2 and Egyptian Cosmology,” *JANES* 15 (1983), 39–49, esp. p. 43.

51. R. Kilian, “Gen 1:2 und die Urgötter von Hermopolis,” *VT* 16 (1965) 420–38. The four cosmic forces were embodied in four pairs of deities: Nun and his consort Naunet, the god and goddess of the primordial waters; Heh and Hehet, god and goddess of boundlessness; Kek and Keket, god and goddess of darkness; and Amun and Amunet, the god and goddess of air.

52. Hoffmeier, “Some Thoughts,” 45.

53. *Ibid.*, 47.

1.6. Review of Previous Scholarship on the Mesopotamian *mīs pī pīt pī* and the Bible

I have discussed already the likelihood that Isaiah's idol parodies reflect a familiarity with the *mīs pī pīt pī* ritual. Although there are no obvious references to the Washing of the Mouth or the Opening of the Mouth in the Hebrew Bible, several prophetic texts reflect an awareness that the manipulation of an individual's sensory organs was thought to activate the individual in some way.⁵⁴ Hurowitz, building on the work of Weinfeld⁵⁵ and others, has argued that the purification of Isaiah's lips in Isaiah 6 is best understood against the background of Mesopotamian ceremonies for the purification of the mouth, including the *mīs pī*.⁵⁶ According to H.-P. Müller, the cleansing of the mouths of the prophets Jeremiah (1:9) and Ezekiel (2:8–3:3) should also be understood in this light.⁵⁷ Finally, J. Kutsko has suggested that the re-creation of corporate Israel in Ezekiel 36–37 "develops an argument that parodies the Mesopotamian pattern of re-creation of cult images prior to their repatriation."⁵⁸ Specifically, he claims that the animation of Israel by the *rûaḥ* of God in Ezek 37:9–10 recalls the animation of divine statues in the Mesopotamian mouth-washing and mouth-opening ceremonies.⁵⁹ "Ezekiel is intentionally contrasting creating humans with imagery involving divine statues," he states, and further, "Ezekiel 37 is consciously drawing this analogy with idols and thereby sharply signaling the distinction in the creation of the people of Israel."⁶⁰ Kutsko observes further that the re-creation of corporate Israel in Ezekiel 36–37 also reflects and develops the story of human creation in Genesis 2.⁶¹ He stops short, however, of suggesting that Genesis 2 reflects the *mīs pī* and/or the *pīt pī* or that it draws a distinction between the creation of humans and divine statues.

In addition to these prophetic texts, Müller and Berlejung have suggested that Gen 2:7, where man is quickened by Yahweh's breath of life,

54. In 1999, I argued in a seminar paper at Harvard University that corporate Israel, especially in Isaiah and Ezekiel, was described in terms reminiscent of the creation, animation, adornment, and installation of a cult statue.

55. M. Weinfeld, "Ancient Near Eastern Patterns in Prophetic Literature," *VT* 27 (1977) 178–95, esp. pp. 180–81.

56. V. Hurowitz, "Isaiah's Impure Lips and Their Purification in Light of Akkadian Sources," *HUCA* 60 (1989) 93–89.

57. H.-P. Müller, "Neue Parallelen zu Gen 2,7: Zur Bedeutung der Religionsgeschichte für die Exegese des Alten Testaments," in *Immigration and Emigration within the Ancient Near East* (ed. K. van Lerberghe and A. Schoors, Leuven: Peeters, 1995) 195–204, esp. p. 200.

58. Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth*, 134.

59. *Ibid.*, 137 n. 138.

60. *Ibid.*, 197. For the comparison of humans with divine statues, see Pss 115 and 135; and G. K. Beale, "Isaiah VI: 9–13: A Retributive Taunt against Idolatry," *VT* 41 (1991) 257–78.

61. Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth*, 33.

reflects the Yahwist's familiarity with the mouth-washing and/or mouth-opening ceremony, or at least with the idea that a divine image could be activated by manipulating its sensory organs.⁶²

H. Niehr also maintains that the Yahwist must have been acquainted with the *mīs pī pīt pī*.⁶³ During the First Temple period, he claims, these rituals would have been performed on a divine statue of Yahweh housed in the Jerusalem temple.⁶⁴ After the destruction of the temple and the statue in 586 B.C.E., however, the physical image would have been replaced for the postexilic Israelites by Yahweh's *kābôd* and by humans in Gen 1:26–27 and Genesis 2. Niehr concludes, "The ritual of vivifying the cult statue was transferred to man in Gen 2. There was no further need of a divine image because YHWH dwelt amongst his people and humans represented YHWH, as a statue would have done before, in the cult of the First Temple."⁶⁵

Whether a statue of Yahweh stood in the Jerusalem temple is not my present concern.⁶⁶ My interest lies, rather, in Niehr's assertion that the Yahwist has applied rituals for the animation of a divine image to the creation of man in Genesis 2. Although I agree with Niehr, as I hope to show more thoroughly in chapter 4, that Gen 2:5–3:24 reflects ancient Near Eastern

62. H.-P. Müller, "Neue Parallelen," 195–204, esp. pp. 199–201; and Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 412 and n. 1946. See also T. Lewis, "Syro-Palestinian Iconography and Divine Images," in *Cult Image and Divine Representation in the Ancient Near East* (ed. N. H. Walls; Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2005) 90 n. 72. The Israelite high priest is yet another figure in the Hebrew Bible who was described in terms reminiscent of a cult statue.

63. H. Niehr, "In Search of Yhwh's Cult Statue in the First Temple," in *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (ed. K. van der Toorn; Leuven: Peeters, 1997) 93.

64. *Ibid.*, 74. Niehr bases his assertion on what he refers to as "a whole series of locutions, rituals and prophetic visions which all relate to a divine statue in the First Temple and which would be quite incomprehensible without it" ("In Search," 81). This includes explicit references and allusions in the psalms to seeing the face, form, and glory of Yahweh (Pss 11:7, 17:15, 27:13, 42:3, 63:3, and 84:8), a reference to the "procession of God" (Ps 68:25), a feast celebrating Yahweh's ascension to the throne (Pss 47, 93, 95, 96–99), the giving of offerings and libations to Yahweh, references to Yahweh's clothing (Isa 6:1, 62:1–3; Ezek 16:8; Dan 7:9; Ps 60:10, 108:10), and prophetic visions in which God was visible (1 Kgs 22:19; Isa 6; Ezek 1, 10; *ibid.*, 79–90). The anthropomorphic language used to describe Yahweh, however, does not mean that a divine statue of Yahweh stood in the first temple, particularly when it appears in poetry and prophecy. Niehr has failed to consider the genres of the texts he cites.

65. *Ibid.*, 93–94.

66. See N. Na'aman, "No Anthropomorphic Graven Image: Notes on the Assumed Anthropomorphic Cult Statues in the Temples of YHWH in the Pre-exilic Period," *UF* 31 (1999) 391–415; *idem* "The Abandonment of Cult Places in the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah as Acts of Cult Reform," *UF* 34 (2002) 585–602; and T. Mettinger, "A Conversation with My Critics: Cultic Image or Aniconism in the First Temple," in *Essays on Ancient Israel in Its Near Eastern Context: A Tribute to Nadav Na'aman* (ed. Y. Amit, E. Ben Zvi, I. Finkelstein, and O. Lipschits; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006) 273–96. See also the bibliography in S. Bunta, "Yhwh's Cultic Statue after 597/586 B.C.E.: A Linguistic and Theological Reinterpretation of Ezekiel 28:12," *CBQ* 69 (2007) 229 n. 30.

image-animation rituals, he does not discuss what aspects of the *mīs pī pīt pī* Genesis 2 exhibits. Furthermore, while Niehr claims that the ritual was “transferred to man in Gen 2,” I will contend that, while Gen 2:5–3:24 draws on features common to vivification rituals, it uses them to say something quite different about divine images and humans. Rather than “transferring” the ritual to man, I will argue in chapter 4 that the biblical author incorporated selected features of these rituals, whether directly or indirectly, and used them for his own purposes, which included redefining *šelem* and *bāšelem* *ʾēlōhīm*. Genesis 2 does not define humans as a “living statue of the deity”⁶⁷ in the same way that a divine statue became the god once its mouth was washed and opened. Rather, humanity was, in some way, created in the image of God but was distinct from God himself. Finally, Niehr does not address the larger question *why* the biblical author would draw on image-animation rituals to describe human creation. That is, what does Gen 2:5–3:24 say about humans and their relationship to the divine? Thus, while Niehr recognizes a connection between Genesis 2 and the mouth-washing and mouth-opening ceremonies, he leaves the thesis undeveloped and in a form that needs revision.

In 2005, A. Schüle elaborated on the potential connection between Genesis 2 and the *mīs pī pīt pī*.⁶⁸ Despite the absence of the terms *šelem* and *dāmūt*, Schüle argues that the author of Genesis 2 is also keenly interested in the idea of humans as “images of God.” This is indicated, he suggests, by a similar overall pattern shared by the story of human creation in Genesis 2 and the creation of a divine image as recorded in the *mīs pī pīt pī* texts: the material shaping and animation of a physical body, the movement from desert to garden, the provision of flora and fauna in the garden, and the presence of the deity.⁶⁹ The Yahwist’s purpose, however, was not to complement the Priestly notion of man’s creation *bāšelem* *ʾēlōhīm*. Rather, according to Schüle, Genesis 2 functions “as an implicit commentary and even criticism of Gen 1:26–28.”⁷⁰ It challenges the Priestly notion that being made in God’s image is an all-encompassing and accurate description of what it means to be human. Furthermore, Genesis 2 seeks to explain why the concept of the image itself is troubling. According to Schüle, “It [the idea that humans were created in God’s image] does not account for what human beings aspire to: the unique relationship to a woman/to a man and the knowledge of good and evil as the most fundamental distinction, underlying all human judgment and human action.”⁷¹ Schüle concludes:

The allusions of Gen 2f. to the making of a divine image reflect a critical reading of the priestly concept as displayed in Gen 1:26–28; 5, 1–3 and

67. Niehr, “In Search,” 93.

68. Schüle, “Made in the Image,” 1–20.

69. Ibid., 13.

70. Ibid., 3.

71. Ibid., 14.

9,6f. It is a criticism not so much because applying the status of a divine image to human beings would be an offense against *God* (that is Deutero-Isaiah's concern). It is rather that the concept of the image does not cover everything of what it means to be *human* or, more precisely, to be *created* as a human being. This does not necessarily mean that the authors of Gen 2f. wished to abandon the idea of man being created in God's image altogether. The intention behind these texts might be less to establish an antithesis, but to reconsider the concept of the image itself.⁷²

At the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in 1999, six years prior to the publication of Schüle's article, I proposed that Gen 2:5–3:24 and the ancient Near Eastern divine statue animation rituals such as the Mesopotamian Washing of the Mouth and Opening of the Mouth exhibit striking parallels both in their overall pattern and in some of the details involved in creating an image. It may be the case that Gen 2:5–3:24 is an implicit commentary on Gen 1:26–27, as Schüle claims. However, he has failed to consider the possibility that the Eden story is the older account and that Gen 1:26–27 is an explicit commentary on the former. Furthermore, I am not persuaded that Gen 2:5–3:24 is a *critical* response to P. As I will show in chapter 4, the accounts of human creation in Gen 1:26–27 and in the Eden story, although distinct, are much more complementary than has been previously assumed.

Further, I do not disagree with Schüle that the author of Genesis 1 intended his description of humans as made *ḥāṣelem ʾēlōhīm* to “cover everything of what it means to be. . . created as a human being.”⁷³ However, as I will argue below, *ṣelem* and *dāmūt* seem to define, in the biblical author's estimation, the *essence* of human identity, not in terms of the male-female relationship or in terms of knowledge, as Schüle claims, *but in terms of humanity's relationship to God*.

Finally, there are several significant parallels between the *pīt pī* specifically and Gen 2:5–3:24 that Schüle has missed. These details, to be discussed in chapter 4, will strengthen my argument that the author of Gen 2:5–3:24 drew on image-animation rituals, or at least the ideas expressed in them, in composing his story of human origins.

In the past two years, two additional publications present evidence that authors of the Hebrew Bible were familiar with the mouth opening ritual. J. Matson claims that the biblical authors intentionally left traces of the *pīt pī* in their text as a polemic against it.⁷⁴ He asserts

The purpose of leaving this remnant within the text was an attempt by the biblical authors to provide a parody of the ritual and juxtapose it with the true opening of the mouth performed by YHWH upon his chosen

72. Ibid., 19.

73. Ibid.

74. J. Matson, “Idol Remains: Remnants of the Opening of the Mouth Ritual in the Hebrew Bible,” *Studia Antiqua* 12/1 (2013) 33–50; and Herring, *Divine Substitution*.

servants and people, showing that the ritual itself was of no use to the images created by humans, but that Y^{HWH} had truly opened the mouth of his prophets and the mouth of Israel to serve as his mouthpieces to the world.⁷⁵

He locates what he refers to as traces of the “opening of the mouth” ritual in the idol parodies in Ps 135:15–18, Hab 2:19, and Jer 10:3–5. Further he claims that the golden calf episode in Exod 32:1–6 and the call of Moses in Exodus 3 follow the tripartite structure of the opening of the mouth ritual, which includes purification, vivification, and enthronement. His argument falters, however, at many points, of which I will only address a few. First, the calls of Aaron and Moses can hardly be equated with the selection of qualified artisans in the *mīs pī pīt pī*, as Matson claims.⁷⁶ Second, the use of pure materials for the golden calf should not be equated with the purification phase of the *mīs pī pīt pī*. Purity is, rather, a general prerequisite for materials used in making cultic implements and images. Nor should we understand Moses’ removal of his sandals at the burning bush to be a “purity scene.”⁷⁷ The removal of the sandals in Exodus 3 is, as C. Palmer brilliantly argues, a sign of “relinquishment, servitude, and devotion” rather than a requirement for purity.⁷⁸ Third, it is unclear how Yahweh’s presence with Moses (Exod 3:12 and 4:12) is to be understood as vivification, and how the enthronement of a cult image is related to leading the Hebrews out of Egypt.⁷⁹ Finally, in his analysis of Ezekiel 36, Matson fails to consider what else his list of supposed parallels to the opening of the mouth could mean. The features he notes, Israel’s purification, the gift of a new heart and spirit, the ability to walk in the statutes of God, and living in the land, must first be examined in light of their *biblical* context. The sprinkling with clean water and being cleansed from filthiness (Ezek 26:35) is better understood in light of Levitical purity laws, something with which Ezekiel, a priest, would have been concerned. The gift of a new heart should be interpreted in light of the circumcision of the heart in Deut 10:16, 30:6, Jer 4:4 and

75. Matson, “Idol Remains,” 35–36. Note that Matson mistranslates *mīs pī* as “opening of the mouth.” In Akkadian the phrase “opening of the mouth” is *pīt pī*. The phrase *mīs pī* should be rendered, “washing of the mouth.” The evidence suggests that the two rituals were originally distinct, but at some point in their history both were subsumed under the single title of *mīs pī*. See §3.2.1 below. Matson also assumes that there were only “slight variances” between the Egyptian *wpt-r* and the Mesopotamian *mīs pī pīt pī*. While the *wpt-r* and the *mīs pī pīt pī* shared a similar goal, there are many significant differences between them, not the least of which is that the bulk of the evidence for the Egyptian *wpt-r* comes from *funerary* contexts. See §§3.4 and 3.5 below.

76. Matson, “Idol Remains,” 46.

77. *Ibid.*, 46.

78. C. Palmer, “Unshod on Holy Ground: Ancient Israel’s ‘Disinherited’ Priesthood” in *Fashioning Jews: Clothing, Culture, and Commerce* (ed. L. Greenspoon; West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2013) 1–17. The quotation is on p. 13.

79. Matson, *Idol Remains*, 47.

the new covenant parallel in Jer 31:33 where the prophet says that Yahweh will put the law within his people, that is, write it on their hearts. Regarding “walking” in God’s statues, this is simply a common expression in the Hebrew Bible for obedience,⁸⁰ and in this context it does not refer to the animation of Israel’s legs, as Mattson claims. Despite my disagreements with Mattson, I concur that there is evidence in Ezekiel, namely, Ezekiel 37, that suggests a familiarity with cult image animation rituals.⁸¹

In sum, scholars have noticed that several passages in the Hebrew Bible, including Genesis 2, seem to reflect an awareness of divine statue animation rituals, specifically the Mesopotamian Washing of the Mouth and the Opening of the Mouth.⁸² Schüle, however, is the only one who has discussed in any detail the possible relationship between Genesis 2 and the *mis pî pî pî*, and how and why the Yahwist would have used these features to define an image of God as a human being. I will not only develop further the connections between Gen 2:5–3:24 and divine statue animation rituals but will argue, contra Schüle, that Gen 2:5–3:24 may complement the enigmatic *šelem*, *dāmût*, and *bāšelem ʾēlōhîm* in Gen 1:26–27, and in addition, that these terms describe what it means to be human by defining humanity’s relationship to God in filial terms. Finally, I will not assume a historical connection between the Eden story and the *mis pî pî pî*, as Müller, Berlejung, Niehr, and Schüle have done. As stated above, a genetic relationship, if it exists among these texts, must be demonstrated, not presupposed.

1.7. Summation and Outline

The problems with which this work is concerned center on the creation of humanity in Gen 1: 26–27 and 2:5–3:24. What does it mean that human beings were created in the *šelem* and *dāmût* of Elohim? What constitutes the image of God, and in what ways are humans similar to it? Is this notion present in Gen 2:5–3:24, or was it, as is commonly assumed, an idea unique within the biblical corpus to the Priestly writer? Furthermore, what is the relationship between these two accounts? Is Gen 2:5–3:24 a sequel to and commentary on Gen 1:26–27, or is Gen 1:26–27 a later statement in which the subtleties in Gen 2:5–3:24 are made explicit?

In order to answer these questions, I will begin with a study of the Eden story itself (chapter 2). Where does the narrative actually begin, what are its limits, and how is it structured? The following chapter (Chapter 3) will introduce the comparative texts, the Washing of the Mouth (*mis pî*) and

80. See Exod 16:4, 18:20; Josh 22:5; 1 Kgs 2:3; 2 Kgs 10:31; Neh 10:29; Ps 119:1; Isa 2:3; Jer 26:4, 32:23, etc.

81. See Kutsko, *Between Heaven and Earth*, 124–38.

82. As I argued in two seminar papers at Harvard University in 1999 and 2003, both corporate Israel, especially in Isaiah and Ezekiel, and the Israelite high priest are described in terms reminiscent of the creation, animation, adornment, and installation of a cult statue.

Opening of the Mouth (*pīt pî*) rituals from Mesopotamia, and the Egyptian counterpart, the Opening of the Mouth (*wpt-r*). After a survey of primary sources, historical references, and previous scholarship, I will summarize and analyze these texts on their own terms in order to establish how, according to these traditions, a divine image was ritually created, animated, and installed. I will also compare the *mīs pî pīt pî* and the *wpt-r* to determine whether the similarities between them are due to a historical connection or if they are better explained typologically.

The fourth chapter will discuss the meaning of *šelem* and *dāmût* and the presence of the *imago dei* concept in Gen 2:5–3:24. Necessarily, it will begin with Gen 1:26–27, where *šelem* and *dāmût* appear, but it will also include a study of these terms in the Hebrew Bible generally and in the book of Genesis specifically. I will then consider the development of these concepts in the Eden story, focusing specifically on selected aspects of Gen 2:5–3:24 that may reflect an awareness of the mouth-washing and/or mouth-opening ceremonies. These include the role of the garden as Yahweh's temple, the feeding and possible installation (*nwh* in Gen 2:15) of the man in the garden-temple of Yahweh, the claim in Ps 8:6[5] that Adam and Eve were crowned with the glory of God (*wākābôd wāhādār tāʾattārēhû*), and the opening of the eyes (*wattippākahnāh ʿênê šānēhem*) in Gen 3:5, 7, 22, as a means of becoming like Elohim (*kēʾlōhîm*) by knowing “good and evil” (*yōdā ʿē ʾtōb wārāʾ*). I will also discuss the relationship between Gen 2:5–3:24 and the comparative sources, as well as the question *why* the author of Gen 2:5–3:24 would have drawn on these *topoi* to (re)define his notion of *šelem* and the divine-human relationship.

The results of these two inquiries—first, the meaning of *šelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27 and second, the presence of the *imago dei* concept in Gen 2:5–3:24—will require a reevaluation of the relationship between these two texts. This will be the subject of chapter 5, which will include a brief review of the source-critical history of both creation accounts and a discussion of their dates of composition, their authorship, and their relationship to one another.

In the sixth and final chapter, I will summarize the findings and discuss the implications of our study for the meaning of *šelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27 and for the overall understanding of Gen 2:5–3:24. I will also comment on the nature of the relationships among Gen 2:5–3:24, the *mīs pî pīt pî*, and the *wpt-r* and how this work has contributed more broadly to two significant areas of inquiry in biblical studies: the relevance of ancient Near Eastern material for biblical interpretation and how one approaches the comparative task. I will conclude with suggestions for future avenues of research.

Chapter 2

The Eden Story: Genesis 2:5–3:24

2.1. Introduction

Before we can evaluate Gen 2:5–3:24 in light of the Mesopotamian *mīs pī pīt pī* and the Egyptian *wpt-r* rituals, we need to examine each of these three texts on its own. The present chapter will deal exclusively with Gen 2:5–3:24, and specifically its structure.¹ After presenting the text and its translation, I will begin my analysis of the structure of Gen 2:5–3:24 with a question: does the Eden story begin in Gen 2:4a, 2:4b, or 2:5? Based on a reexamination of the *tōlādōt* notices in Genesis, I will seek to demonstrate that Gen 2:4 in its entirety, the “*tōlādōt* of the heavens and the earth,” functions as both the conclusion to Gen 1:1–2:3 and as the introduction to Gen 2:5–3:24. Gen 2:5, I contend, is where the Eden story proper begins. This is significant because it bears directly on our understanding of the relationship between Gen 2:5–3:24 and the preceding creation account in Gen 1, as well as their canonical order, which will be discussed in chapter 5.

I will then examine the literary structure of Gen 2:5–3:24, in order to show that each of its three subsections (2:5–17, 2:18–25, and 3:1–24) is organized around a problem-solution schema. The third division, however, ends with an additional and much more serious crisis: the man and the woman have become like *’ēlōhīm*. The severity of the offense is conveyed not only through the content of the story, but, as I will argue below, by its artful construction and by the literary devices used to tell it.

2.2. Text and Translation

5²: וְכָל־שֵׁיחַ הַשָּׂדֶה טָרֵם יְהִיָּה בָאָרֶץ וְכָל־עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה טָרֵם יִצְמַח כִּי לֹא הִמְטִיר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל־הָאָרֶץ וְאָדָם אֵין לְעֹבֵד אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה: 6²: וְאֵד יַעֲלֶה מִן־הָאָרֶץ וְהִשְׁקָה אֶת־כָּל־פְּנֵי־הָאֲדָמָה: 7²: וַיִּיצֹר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם עֹפֶר מִן־הָאֲדָמָה וַיִּפַּח בְּאַפָּיו נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה: 8²: וַיִּטַּע יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים גֶּן־בְּדֶדֶן מִקְדָּשׁ וַיִּשֶׂם שֵׁם אֶת־הָאֲדָם אֲשֶׁר יָצָר: 9²: וַיִּצְמַח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן־הָאֲדָמָה כָּל־עֵץ נְחֹמֶד לְמַרְאֶה וְטוֹב לְמֵאֲכָל וְעֵץ הַחַיִּים בְּתוֹךְ הֶגֶן וְעֵץ הַדַּעַת טוֹב וְרָע: 10²: וַנִּהְיֶה יִצָּא מִעֵדֶן לְהִשְׁקוֹת אֶת־הֶגֶן וּמִשָּׁם יָפֹרֵד וַיְהִי לְאַרְבָּעָה רָאשִׁים: 11²: שֵׁם הָאֶחָד פִּישׁוֹן הוּא הַסֹּבֵב אֶת כָּל־אֶרֶץ הַחַיִּילָה אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם הַזֹּהָב: 12²: וַיִּהְיֶה הָאָרֶץ הַהוּא טוֹב שֵׁם הַבְּדֵלָח וְאֶבֶן הַשֹּׁהַם: 13²: וְשֵׁם הַנְּהָרֹה הַשֵּׁנִי גִיחוֹן הוּא הַסֹּבֵב אֶת כָּל־אֶרֶץ כּוּשׁ: 14²: וְשֵׁם הַנְּהָרֹה הַשְּׁלִישִׁי חִדְקֵל הוּא הַהֹלֵךְ קִדְמַת אַשּׁוּר וַנְּהָרֹה הָרְבִיעִי הוּא פָּרַת: 15²: וַיִּקַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם וַיַּנְחֵהוּ בִּגְן־

1. The important issue of the date and authorship of the Eden story will be reserved for chap. 5, where we will consider it together with and in relationship to the issues of the date and authorship of Gen 1:1–2:3.

עַדן לְעִבְדָּהּ וּלְשִׁמְרָהּ: 16²: וַיְצַו יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל־הָאָדָם לֵאמֹר מִכָּל עֵץ־הַגֶּן אָכַל תֹּאכַל: 17²: וּמִעֵץ הַדֶּעַת טוֹב נָרַע לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ כִּי בְיוֹם אֲכָלְךָ מִמֶּנּוּ מוֹת תָּמוּת: 18²: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לֹא־טוֹב הָיִיתָ הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ אֶעֱשֶׂה־לוֹ עֹזֵר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ: 19²: וַיִּצַּר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן־הָאָדָמָה כָּל־חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה וְאֵת כָּל־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיָּבֵא אֶל־הָאָדָם לִרְאוֹת מֶה־יִּקְרָא־לוֹ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָא־לוֹ הָאָדָם נָפֶשׁ חַיָּה הוּא שְׁמוֹ: 20²: וַיִּקְרָא הָאָדָם שְׁמוֹת לְכָל־הַבְּהֵמָה וּלְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּלְכָל־חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה וּלְאָדָם לֹא־מָצָא עֹזֵר כְּנֶגְדּוֹ: 21²: וַיִּפַּל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים תְּרוּמָה עַל־הָאָדָם וַיִּישֶׁן וַיִּקַּח אֶחָת מִצִּלְעֹתָיו וַיִּסְגֹּר בָּשָׂר תַּחְתָּנָהּ: 22²: וַיִּבֶן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הַצֶּלַע אֲשֶׁר־לָקַח מִן־הָאָדָם לְאִשָּׁה וַיָּבֵאָהּ אֶל־הָאָדָם: 23²: וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם זֹאת הִפַּעַם עֵצָם מִעֲצָמִי וּבָשָׂר מִבָּשָׂרִי לְזֹאת יִקְרָא אִשָּׁה כִּי מֵאִישׁ לָקָחָהּ זֹאת: 24²: עַל־כֵּן יַעֲזֹב־אִישׁ אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אִמּוֹ וְדָבַק בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ וְהָיוּ לְבָשָׂר אֶחָד: 25²: וַיְהִיו שְׁנֵיהֶם עֶרְוִמִּים הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְלֹא יִתְבָּשְׂרוּ: 1³: וַהֲנַחֵשׁ הָיָה עֶרּוֹם מִכָּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה אַף כִּי־אָמַר אֱלֹהִים לֹא תֹאכְלוּ מִכָּל עֵץ הַגֶּן: 2³: וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה אֶל־הַנָּחַשׁ מָפְרִי עֵץ־הַגֶּן נֹאכַל: 3³: וּמִפְרִי הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹךְ־הַגֶּן אָמַר אֱלֹהִים לֹא תֹאכְלוּ מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא תִגְעוּ בּוֹ פֶּן־תָּמוּתוּן: 4³: וַיֹּאמֶר הַנָּחַשׁ אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה לֹא־מוֹת תָּמוּתוּן: 5³: כִּי יָדַע אֱלֹהִים כִּי בְיוֹם אֲכָלְכֶם מִמֶּנּוּ וּנְפַקְחוּ עֵינֵיכֶם וְהִייתֶם כַּאֲלֹהִים יֹדְעֵי טוֹב וָרָע: 6³: וַתֹּאֲרָה הָאִשָּׁה כִּי טוֹב הָעֵץ לְמֹאכַל וְכִי תִאֲנֶה־הוּא וְעֵינַיִם וְנִחְמָד הָעֵץ לְהַשְׂכִּיל וַתִּקַּח מִפְּרִיו וַתֹּאכַל וַתִּתֵּן גַּם־לְאִישָׁהּ עִמָּה וַיֹּאכַל: 7³: וַתִּפְקְחֶנָּה עֵינֵי שְׁנֵיהֶם וַיֵּדְעוּ כִּי עֶרְוָתָם הִם וַתִּתְפָּרוּ עָלֶיהָ תִּאֲנֶה וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם חֲגֹרֹת: 8³: וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת־קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִתְּהִלָּף בְּגֵן לְרוֹתֵם הַיּוֹם וַיִּתְחַבְּא הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וַיִּהְיֶה אֱלֹהִים בְּתוֹךְ עֵץ הַגֶּן: 9³: וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶל־הָאָדָם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֵיכָּה: 10³: וַיֹּאמֶר אֶת־קִלְךָ שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּגֵן וַאֲיָרָא כִּי־עִירַם אֲנִי וַאֲחֵבָא: 11³: וַיֹּאמֶר מִי הִגִּיד לָךְ כִּי עִירַם אֶתָּה הִמֵּן־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לֵבִלְתִּי אֲכָל־מִמֶּנּוּ אֲכָלְתָּ: 12³: וַיֹּאמֶר הָאָדָם הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה עִמָּדִי הוּא נִתְּנָה־לִּי מִן־הָעֵץ וָאָכַל: 13³: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לְאִשָּׁה מֶה־זֹּאת עָשִׂיתָ וַתֹּאמֶר הָאִשָּׁה הִנָּחֵשׁ הִשְׁיִאֲנִי וָאָכַל: 14³: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶל־הַנָּחַשׁ כִּי עָשִׂיתָ זֹאת אֲרוּרָה אַתָּה מִכָּל־הַבְּהֵמָה וּמִכָּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה עַל־גִּחְזֶךָ תֵּלֵךְ וְעָפָר תֹּאכַל כָּל־יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ: 15³: וַאֲיָכָה אֲשִׁית בֵּינְךָ וּבֵין הָאִשָּׁה וּבֵין זַרְעָךָ וּבֵין זַרְעָהּ הוּא יְשׁוּפֶךָ רֹאשׁ וְאַתָּה תִּשׁוּפֶנּוּ עָקֵב: 16³: אֶל־הָאִשָּׁה אָמַר הָרְבָּה אֲרַבָּה עֲצָבוֹנְךָ וְהָרְגוֹךָ בְּעֶצֶב תֵּלִיד בָּנִים וְאֶל־אִישׁךָ תִּשׁוּקָתְךָ וְהוּא יִמְשָׁל־בָּךְ: 17³: וְלָאָדָם אָמַר כִּי־שָׁמַעְתָּ לְקוֹל אִשְׁתְּךָ וַתֹּאכַל מִן־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לֵאמֹר לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ אֲרוּרָה הָאָדָמָה בְּעִבְרֶיךָ בְּעֶצְבוֹן תֹּאכְלֶנָּה כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ: 18³: וְקוֹץ וְדִרְדֹּר תַּצְמִיחַ לָךְ וָאָכַלְתָּ אֶת־עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה: 19³: בְּזַעַת אָפִיךָ תֹאכַל לֶחֶם עַד שׁוֹבֶךְ אֶל־הָאָדָמָה כִּי מִמֶּנָּה לָקַחְתָּ כִּי־עָפָר אַתָּה וְאֶל־עָפָר תִּשׁוּב: 20³: וַיִּקְרָא הָאָדָם שֵׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ חַוָּה כִּי הִוא הִיְתָה אִם־כָּל־חַיִּי: 21³: וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לָאָדָם וּלְאִשְׁתּוֹ כְּתִנּוֹת עוֹר וַיִּלְבָּשֵׂם: פ
22³: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים הֵן הָאָדָם הָיָה כְּאֶחָד מִמֶּנּוּ לְדַעַת טוֹב וָרָע וְעַתָּה פֶּן־יִשְׁלַח יָדוֹ וְלָקַח גַּם מִעֵץ הַחַיִּים וָאָכַל וַחַי לְעַלְמִם: 23³: וַיִּשְׁלַחְהוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִגֶּן־עֵדֶן לְעַבְדָּתָא אֶת־הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר לָקַח מִשָּׁם: 24³: וַיִּגְרֶשׁ אֶת־הָאָדָם וַיִּשְׁכֵּן מִקְדָּם לְגֶן־עֵדֶן אֶת־הַכְּרִבִּים וְאֵת לֶהֱט הַחֵרֶב הַמִּתְהַפֶּכֶת לְשׁוֹר אֶת־דֶּרֶךְ עֵץ הַחַיִּים:

Textual Notes

2:18. The LXX and the Vulgate have "let us make," reflecting Hebrew *na'āseh*. See Gen 1:26.

2:20. Some mss, LXX, the Syriac, the Tg., and the Vulgate add "all" between *la* and *ōp*, but this was likely an expansion based on the preceding *lakōl*.

2:23. The LXX and the Tg. read "her man," reflecting Hebrew *mē'īšāh*.

2:24. The LXX, the Syriac, the Tg. and the Vulgate insert "the two of them"; Compare *šanêhem* in Gen 2:25.

3:1. The LXX and the Syriac add “the snake” after *wayyōʾ*. 4QGen^k adds the interrogative *heh* to *ʾp*, but this is unnecessary because *ʾap kî* is itself an interrogative. See P. Joüon, and T. Muraoka. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (rev. ed.; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 2006) 157aN.

3:6. The LXX and the Vulgate omit “the tree”; the SP and the LXX both have a plural, “they ate.”

3:11. The DSS reads *ʾr[wm]*.

3:14. The DSS employs the *plene* spelling *kwl* instead of *kōl*.

3:16. The LXX and the Syriac add an unnecessary conjunction (“and”) to the beginning of the verse.

2:5 Now no shrub of the field was yet on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprouted because Yahweh Elohim had not sent rain on the earth, and there was no man to work the ground. 6 But an *ʾēd*² (cloud or mist?) began to come up³ from the earth and water the entire surface of the ground. 7 Then, Yahweh Elohim formed the man of dust from the ground, and he blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. 8 And Yahweh Elohim planted a garden in Eden, in the east,⁴ and he placed there the man whom he had formed. 9 Then Yahweh Elohim caused to sprout from the earth all (kinds of)⁵ trees pleasant to the sight and good for food. Now the tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. 10 Now a river was flowing from Eden to water the garden and from there it divided and became four headwaters. 11 The name of the first is Pishon. It is the one that flows around all the land of Havilah where there is gold, 12 and the gold of that land is good. The bdellium and the *šoham* stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flows around all the land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river is the Tigris. It is the one that flows east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates. 15 Then Yahweh Elohim took the man and installed him in the garden of Eden to till/work it and guard it. 16 Then Yahweh Elohim commanded the man, “From every tree of the garden you may surely eat, 17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you may not eat from it, for on the day you eat from it you will

2. The meaning of this term is uncertain. Modern English translations render it “mist” (ESV, NASB, KJV, RSV, NJPSV) or “streams” (NIV), but the LXX has *pēgē* (spring, fountain, well, flow). See the only other attestation of this term in the Hebrew Bible in Job 36:27, where the LXX has *nephelē*, “cloud.” It may refer to a subterranean stream. The Targums favor “cloud,” while the LXX, Vulgate, and Syriac favor “groundflow.”

3. For the translation of *yaʿāleh* as “began to come up,” see B. Waltke and M. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 503–4 §31.2c, especially the example in §9 from 2 Sam 23:9–10, where *waw* + noun + imperfect can be translated, “then the troops began returning after him.”

4. *Miqqēdem* can also refer to “primeval times” and was translated as such in the Targums, Aq., Symmachus, Theodotion, Syriac, and the Vulgate (See also Isa 45:21; 46:10; Mic 5:1; Hab 1:12; Ps 74:12; 77:6, 12; and 143:5), but here it is interpreted spatially with the LXX. See Gen 11:2; 12:8; Isa 9:11; Zech 14:4.

5. *Kōl* before indefinite nouns can indicate “all kinds of” (GKC, 127b).

surely die.”⁶ 18 Then Yahweh Elohim said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make for him a helper corresponding to him”⁷ (a corresponding helper).” 19 So Yahweh Elohim formed from the ground every beast of the field and every bird of the sky and he brought (them) to the man to see what he would name them (it), and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all the beasts and birds of the sky and to all the living creatures of the field, but for the man, he did not find a corresponding helper. 21 So Yahweh Elohim caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept. Then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place (with) flesh. 22 Then, Yahweh Elohim built with the rib he took from the man a woman, and he brought her to the man. 23 Then, the man said, “This time, bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh! This one shall be called woman because from man this one was taken.” 24 Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife and the two shall become one flesh. 25 The two of them were naked, the man and his wife, but they were not ashamed. 3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other living creature of the field which Yahweh Elohim had made, and he said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” 2 The woman said to the serpent, “Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat, 3 but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden God said, ‘You must not eat from it, nor should you touch it, lest you die.’” 4 The serpent said to the woman, “Surely you will not die. 5 For God knows that when you eat from it, your eyes will be opened and you will become like Elohim, knowing good and evil.” 6 The woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise. So she took some of its fruit and she ate, and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. 7 Then, the eyes of the two of them were opened and they knew that they were naked, so they sewed together fig leaves and made loincloths for themselves. 8 Then, they heard the sound of Yahweh Elohim walking/moving about in the garden in the wind of the storm,⁸ so the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Yahweh Elohim in the midst of the garden of Eden. 9 Then, Yahweh Elohim called to the man, and he said to him, “Where are you?” 10 And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden and I was afraid because I am naked, so I hid myself.” 11 He said, “Who told you that you are naked? Did you eat from the tree which I commanded you not to eat?” 12 The man replied, “The woman which you gave to be with me, she gave to me from the tree and I ate.” 13 Then, Yahweh Elohim

6. On death in Gen 2:17 and 3:3–4 as a loss of immortality, see P. Machinist, “How Gods Die, Biblically and Otherwise: A Problem of Cosmic Restructuring,” in *Reconsidering the Concept of Revolutionary Monotheism* (ed. B. Pongratz-Leisten; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011).

7. The Hebrew phrase is *kānegdô*.

8. J. J. Niehaus, “In the Wind of the Storm: Another Look at Gen III:8,” *VT* 44 (1994) 263–67.

said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman replied, "The serpent deceived me and I ate." 14 Then, Yahweh Elohim said to the snake, "Because you have done this, cursed are you more than the beasts and more than the creatures of the field. Upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 15 Enmity I will put between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He will bruise (your) head and you will bruise (his) heel." 16 To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pain and your groanings.⁹ In toil you will bear children. Your desire will be for your husband, but he will rule over you." 17 And to the man he said, "Because you have obeyed the voice of your wife and you ate from the tree which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat from it,' cursed is the ground because of you. In toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. 18 Thorns and thistles it will bring forth for you and you shall eat the plants of the field. 19 By the sweat of your face you will eat food until you return to the ground, for from it you were taken. For dust you are, and to dust you will return." 20 Then, the man named his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all living things. 21 Then, Yahweh Elohim made for the man and for his wife coverings of skin, and he clothed them. 22 Yahweh Elohim said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil. Now lest he stretch out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat and live forever. . . ." ¹⁰ 23 So Yahweh Elohim sent him out from the garden to work the ground from which he had been taken. 24 He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword turning back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

2.3. Where Does the Eden Story Begin?

2.3.1. Genesis 2:4b?

Traditionally, source-critical scholars have understood Gen 2:4b, *bəyôm 'ăšôt Yhwh 'ēlōhîm 'ereš wəšāmāyim*, as the introduction to Gen 2:5–3:24.¹¹ Like Gen 1:1–2, which is obviously the beginning of the first creation narrative, 2:4b–5 exhibits a subordinate temporal relative clause.¹² In both

9. Many English translations incorrectly render the MT *whmk* as "in childbearing." Compare the LXX *plēthynōn plēthynō tas lypas soy kai ton stenagmon*, "I will greatly multiply your pains and your groanings."

10. J. Walsh says, on the aposiopesis in v. 22, "The v. is grammatically incomplete. The effect is to underline its character as a divine deliberation rather than a pronouncement directed to a hearer" ("Genesis 2:4b–3:24: A Synchronic Approach," *JBL* 96 [1977] 169).

11. Among those who conclude that the Eden story begins with Gen 2:4b are G. von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972), 73; W. Brueggemann, *Genesis* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1982), 40; and C. Westermann, *Creation* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974) 178, 197–98. Initially, B. Witter (1711), J. Astruc (1753), J. G. Eichhorn (1779/80), and J. D. Michaelis (1787) argued that the first creation account ended with Gen 2:3. See the references in T. Stordalen "Genesis 2, 4," 163.

12. Most recently discussed by A. Schüle, *Der Prolog der hebräischen Bibel: Der literar- und theologiegeschichtliche Diskurs der Urgeschichte (Gen 1–11)* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 2006) 160.

cases, the protasis begins with a temporal clause, *bərēʾšīt* (1:1) and *bəyôm* (2:4b), while the apodosis begins with a disjunctive *waw*: *wəhāʾāreš* (1:2) and *wəkōl śīaḥ haššādeh* (2:5). Furthermore, Gen 2:4a was associated with the preceding narrative on the basis of the parallel terminology in 2:4a and 1:1, *brʾ* and *haššāmāyim wə-hāʾāreš*, which forms an *inclusio*. Several features of 2:4b suggest that this clause begins a new story: (1) 2:4a refers to “the heavens and the earth,” while 2:4b reverses the order of the nouns and omits the definite articles, yielding “earth and heaven.” (2) 2:4a uses the verb *brʾ* to describe creation, as does Gen 1, whereas 2:4b uses *ʾšh* as well as *ysr*. (3) 2:4b introduces a new divine name, Yahweh Elohim. (4) The very content of 2:4b, “In the day that Yahweh Elohim made the earth and the heavens” (*bəyôm ʾšōt Yhwh ʾēlōhīm ʾereš wəšāmāyim*) marks it as the opening line of a creation narrative; in this regard, the structure of the clause is parallel not only to that of 1:1, as just noted, but also to that of the opening line of the Babylonian creation account, *Enūma Eliš*, “when, on high” (*e-nu-ma e-liš*).¹³

2.3.2. Genesis 2:4a?

Despite the majority view that Gen 2:4a concludes the Priestly (P) creation account, several scholars have argued that it ends with 2:3.¹⁴ This is based largely on the fact that the term *tōlādōt*, “generations” or “history,” which makes its first appearance in 2:4a, functions consistently in the Hebrew Bible as an introduction to what follows, not as a conclusion to what precedes it.¹⁵ *This includes five times in Genesis alone, in which tōlādōt is paired with ʾēlleh*, as in Gen 2:4a.¹⁶

The Septuagint translators indicate that they, too, understood *tōlādōt* as a superscript, rendering the term in Gen 2:4a as they did in Gen 5:1, where it clearly refers to what follows:

13. C. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Commentary* (trans. J. J. Scullion; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984) 269–70.

14. W. H. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1964) 91–93; F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973) 302; S. Tengström, “Die Toledotformel und die literarische Struktur der priesterlichen Erweiterungsschicht im Pentateuch,” *CBOTS* 17 (1982) 54–69; I. M. Kikawada and A. Quinn, *Before Abraham Was: The Unity of Genesis 1–11* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1985) 60; G. J. Wenham *Genesis 1–15* (ed. D. A. Hubbard and G. W. Barker; WBC 1; Waco, TX: Word, 1987) 49, 55–56; J. D. Levenson, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988) 66–67, 165 n. 1; Stordalen “Genesis 2, 4,” 173; and S. Herring, *Divine Substitution: Humanity as the Manifestation of Deity in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 88 n. 1.

15. Parallel to the formula in 2:4: Gen 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2; Num 3:1; Ruth 4:18; 1 Chr 1:29. See also Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 55–56; and Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 302.

16. Gen 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 25:12, 19; Num 3:1; Ruth 4:18; 1 Chr 1:29. See T. Stordalen “Genesis 2, 4,” 171 with n. 28.

Gen 2:4a Αὕτη ἡ βίβλος γενέσεως οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς
This is the book of the genealogy of heaven and earth.

Gen 5:1 Αὕτη ἡ βίβλος γενέσεως ἀνθρώπων
This is the book of the genealogy of humanity.

Furthermore, twice, in Gen 5:1 and Num 3:1, *’ēlleh tōlādōt* is paired with a dependent clause containing *bəyôm*, as in Gen 2:4a. Stordalen comments, “The occurrence of a dependent sentence starting with *bəyôm* attached to *tōlādōt* in two instances outside Gen 2, 4¹⁷ clearly suggests that this was an acceptable construction for a competent Hebrew reader.”¹⁸

The arguments that the second creation account begins with Gen 2:4b, however, are compelling. The terms *br’* and *haššāmayim* in 1:1 do form a nice *inclusio* with 2:4a, and the clause “These are the generations of the heavens and the earth” seems to be a fitting summary of Gen 1:1–2:3. Furthermore, if the second account begins with Gen 2:4b, then the similar syntax of Gen 1:1–2 and 2:4b–5 appears to mark each passage as the beginning of a creation account. Finally, the parallel between the opening of the Eden story and the initial lines of the Babylonian *Enūma Eliš*, a creation account with which it shares many other similarities, is suggestive. However, the fact that *tōlādōt* functions consistently in Genesis and elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible as an introduction to what follows must not be summarily dismissed. Is it possible that Gen 2:4 is *both* a summary of Gen 1:1–2:3 and an introduction to the Eden story?

2.3.3. The *tōlādōt* Step Pattern

It is important to note that, elsewhere in Genesis, while *tōlādōt* does function consistently as an introduction, it is not unrelated to what precedes it. In Gen 5:1, the *tōlādōt* phrase not only introduces the following material—that is, the list of Adam’s descendants beginning with Seth and Enosh; it is also tied to the preceding narrative in 4:1–26, namely, the record of Cain and Abel’s births, Cain’s genealogy, and the births of Seth and Enosh. In other words, there are two accounts of Adam’s family history, one in Gen 4:1–26 and the second in Gen 5:3–32, joined together by 5:1a (for Gen 5:1b–2, see the following paragraph). Thus, *zeh sēper tōlādōt ’ādām* in Gen 5:1a may be intended as both a summary statement of 4:1–26 and a heading for 5:3–32: Gen 5:3–8 recapitulates the last two verses of 4:1–26 and then expands on them in Gen 5:9–32. This expansion continues the *tōlādōt* of Adam, adding new material to what was first introduced in 4:25–26 and 5:3–8. The pattern can be depicted as follows.

17. Gen 5:1 and Num 3:1.

18. Stordalen “Genesis 2, 4,” 171. He adds, “Gen 2,4 (a+b) is a literary unit bridging Genesis 1 and 2–3: So we should abandon both the traditional documentary hypothesis in Gen 2, 4 and the more recent attempt to read Gen 2,4a as a redactional introduction to Gen 2,4b–3,24” (Stordalen “Genesis 2, 4,” 171, 173).

A	Text A (narrative of Cain and Abel)	Gen 4:1–26
B	<i>tôladôt</i> formula	Gen 5:1a
(C)	(intervening verses)	(Gen 5:1b–2)
A'	recapitulation of selected portions of A with a focus on a specific feature of A plus additional information Specifically, as I have said, Gen 5:3–8 (A') is a recapitulation of 4:25–26 (the last verses of A). The specific feature of A that becomes the new focus for the following text is Adam's line via Seth. The additional information includes Adam's age at the time of Seth's birth, the statement that Seth was a son in Adam's own likeness and image, and the record of descendants and their ages from Adam to Enosh in Gen 3:5–11.	Gen 5:3–8
D	continuation of A's expansion of selected portions from A	Gen 5:9–32

The intervening verses in 5:1b–2 and the explicit reference to Gen 1:26–27 in 5:3, where Seth is described as the *šelem* and *dāmût* of his father, Adam, signify that God's chosen line continues not through Cain, who is not mentioned again in the entire Hebrew Bible, but through Seth, whose birth is introduced as a sort of "second creation" (compare Gen 5:1–3 with Gen 1:26–27) and whose name appears again in the selected genealogy in 1 Chr 1:1–2.¹⁹ Thus, the *tôladôt* notice in Gen 5:1a marks a transition between the preceding narrative material and the following genealogical material.

The same transitional function may be ascribed to the *tôladôt* notices associated with Terah (Gen 11:27) and with Jacob (Gen 37:2a). In Gen 11:27, *wə'ēleh tôladôt terah* is both a subscript for v. 26 (or perhaps vv. 24–26), "When Terah had lived seventy years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran," and a superscript for the following narrative (v. 27b–32) about those same individuals. Note that as with the *tôladôt* of Adam in Gen 5:1, Gen 11:27 recapitulates the immediately preceding 11:26 and then continues the family history by introducing new information, going beyond the content of 11:26. Thus, as in Gen 5:1, the pattern is ABA'D, without any intervening verses (C).

A	Text A (genealogy of Shem)	Gen 11:10–26
B	<i>tôladôt</i> formula	Gen 11:27a
(C)	(intervening verses)	(none)
A'	recapitulation of selected portions of A with a focus on a specific feature of A plus additional information Specifically, 11:27b (A') is a recapitulation of 11:26b (A):	Gen 11:27b

19. Compare Luke 3:38.

11:26b (A) = “and he (Terah) fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.”

11:27b (A') = “Terah fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.” The specific feature on which the following text focuses is not Haran, who dies in Ur (Gen 11:28), nor on Nahor (although his descendants are mentioned in Gen 22:20–24 because this is the line of Rebekah; see also Gen 24:15, 24; 29:5), but on Abram, starting in 12:1.

11:27c offers additional information: Haran fathered Lot.

- D continuation of A's expansion of Gen 11:28–25:10
Gen 11:28 with a particular focus on Abram

Similarly, *'elleh tōlādōt ya'ākōb* in Gen 37:2a seems to function both as a subscript to 35:22b–26, which is a list of the 12 sons of Jacob, and as a heading to the resumption of the story in 37:2b, where the focus is now on Joseph. The other 11 sons of Jacob are mentioned in 37:2–36 but only generically: once as “the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah,” 17 times as “brothers,” 18 times as “they” or “them,” and once as “sons.”²⁰ The only exceptions are Reuben (v. 21, 29) and Judah (v. 26), who are named, presumably, because they are the only brothers unwilling to murder Joseph (37:20), and, because at different points, they are the senior sons/tribes of Jacob. Clearly, the focus has narrowed from the 12 sons of Jacob listed by name in Gen 35:23–26, prior to the *tōlādōt* formula, to the privileged second-youngest son, Joseph, who is mentioned in 35:24 but whose story unfolds immediately after the heading, *'elleh tōlādōt ya'ākōb*, beginning in 37:2b. The pattern can be depicted as follows.

A	Text A	Gen 35:22b–26; 37:1
B	<i>tōlādōt</i> formula	Gen 37:2
(C)	(intervening verses)	Gen 36:1–43 (Esau)
A'	recapitulation of selected portions of A with a focus on a specific feature of A plus additional information Specifically, Gen 37:2 (A') is a recapitulation of Gen 35:22c–26 (A): Gen 35:22c–26 (A) list of 12 sons of Jacob Gen 37:2 (A') Joseph, brothers, sons of Bilhah and Zilpah The specific feature in A on which the following text focuses is Joseph.	Gen 37:2b

20. *Sons of Bilhah and Zilpah*: Gen 37:2, referring only to Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher; *brothers*: Gen 37:2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10 (2×), 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 23, 26, 27, 30; *they or them*: Gen 37:2, 4, 5, 8, 16, 17, 18 (2×), 19, 23, 24, 25 (2×), 28 (2×), 31, 32 (2×); *sons*: Gen 37:35.

D	continuation of A's expansion of Gen 37:3 with a particular focus on Joseph	Gen 37:3–36; 39:1–50:26
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As in Genesis 5, there are intervening verses between the *tôladôt* formula (B) and the recapitulation (A') and expansion (D) sections. These verses, 36:1–43, contain the *tôladôt* of Esau, Jacob's twin brother. His genealogy is included, just as Cain's genealogy was in 5:17–22, to complete the family history, but his is not the chosen line. Just as Cain is not mentioned again in Genesis, neither is Esau. Once their genealogies have been recorded, the author/redactor refocuses the reader's attention on the principal figures with a brief recapitulation of the pre-*tôladôt* text (text A' in my schema), after which he adds the new material, in this case, the continuation of Jacob's *tôladôt*. Thus, as in Gen 5:1 and 11:27a, the *tôladôt* formula in 37:2 seems to apply both to what precedes it, namely, the list of the 12 sons of Jacob, including the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah (Gen 35:22b–26), and to what follows beginning in Gen 37:2b, that is, the story of Joseph, who was pasturing the flock with his brothers, "along with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah." In other words, the *tôladôt* formula unites the two accounts while pointing in both directions, and serves as the conduit through which the focus narrows from the many to the one, that is, to Joseph.²¹

In the case of Gen 6:9, the *tôladôt* of Noah, the pattern departs from the ABA'(C)D schema discussed above, but it does feature recapitulation. That is, as with the genealogies in Gen 5:1a, Gen 11:27a, and Gen 37:2a, the story does not progress in a purely linear fashion. The names of individuals from an earlier text are repeated before the narrative continues. In the case of Noah, he and his three sons are named in 5:32 at the conclusion of Adam's genealogy, which begins in Gen 5:1. This is followed by a brief account of the corruption of humankind (Gen 6:1–8) and then the *tôladôt* of Noah, in which the names of his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, are repeated in 6:9–10. The flood story follows in 6:11–9:29, after which the genealogies of Japheth (Gen 10:1–5), Ham (Gen 10:6–20), and Shem (Gen 10:21–32) are given. Note that the order has been reversed from Gen 6:9–10. Shem now concludes the list because it is he who will be the principal son and heir. The list of Shem's sons which follows includes Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram; Shem's grandsons, Uz, Hul, Gether,

21. Obviously, Joseph's brothers are included in Gen 37; 39–50 but they are secondary. The primary figure on whom the story focuses is clearly Joseph. Compare the function of *wā'ēlleh tôladôt pâreš* in Ruth 4:18a. A partial genealogy of Perez is given in 4:17b: "[Obed] became the father of Jesse, the father of David." This is immediately followed by *'ēlleh tôladôt pâreš*, which is then followed by a more detailed genealogy of Perez, ending with David, as did the abbreviated genealogy in 4:17b. Although the structure differs slightly from the examples in Genesis in that the expansion section gives a fuller account of the family members between Perez and David, rather than listing David's offspring as would be expected, and there is no recapitulation section, it is worth noting that *'ēlleh tôladôt pâreš* seems to function, as do the *tôladôt* in Gen 5:1 and 37:2, both as a subscript to the partial genealogy given in Ruth 4:17b and as the heading for 4:18b–22.

and Mash; the sons of Aram; and Shelah and Eber, the sons of Arpachshad. However, when the account of Shem's line is resumed in Gen 11:10–26, only Arpachshad and his line are repeated. In short, despite the differences between the pattern in Gen 9:6 and the pattern in Gen 11:3, the author/redactor used recapitulation as a means of connecting the genealogies to one another and narrowing the focus onto the line of Arpachshad, because it is this line from which the protagonist of the following cycle of stories, Abraham, will come.

Similarly, the *tôladôt* of Ishmael in Gen 25:12 and its elaboration in Gen 25:13–18 recapitulate and then expand on information from Gen 16–17.²² Specifically, the record of Ishmael's 12 sons in Gen 25:13–18 refers back to the promise God made to Hagar in Gen 17:20: "And as for Ishmael . . . I will bless him, and I will make him fruitful, and will multiply him greatly. He will become the father of 'twelve princes' (*šānēm 'āsār nāšî'im yôlîd*), and I will make him a great nation." Not only are the two passages linked by their content, but the description in Gen 25:16 of Ishmael's sons as *šānēm 'āsār nāšî'im* (12 princes) is surely a direct reference to the *šānēm 'āsār nāšî'im yôlîd* of Gen 17:20.

As with the other *tôladôt* notices, the genealogy of Isaac in Gen 25:19–26 also reviews select information before continuing the story. Gen 25:19–20 reiterates that Abraham became the father of Isaac and that Isaac married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, information that was originally given in Gen 21:1–5 and Genesis 24.

In Genesis 36, there are not one but two genealogies of Esau (Gen 36:1, 9). The first introduces Esau; his wives, Adah, Oholibamah, and Basemeth; and their sons. Adah bore Eliphaz, Basemath bore Reuel, and Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. This first genealogy also reminds the reader that Esau had been renamed Edom, a reference back to Gen 25:30. Further, it reports in Gen 36:6–8 that Esau took his entire family, his household, and all his goods and moved far from Jacob because the land could no longer sustain both his and Jacob's families (Gen 36:7–8). This is a recapitulation of sorts because the reader already knows from Gen 32:3 that Esau has moved to Seir.²³ The second *tôladôt* of Esau in Gen 36:9 refers to Esau as "the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir," hearkening back to Gen 25:30 and especially referring to the immediately preceding verse in

22. Specifically, Gen 16:11–12, 15–16; 17:20, 23–27.

23. Note that Esau's move to the hill country of Seir is not reported until Gen 35:6–8, but it took place prior to the events recorded in the immediately preceding chapters, Gen 32:24–35:29. This is made explicit in Gen 32:3, which reports that when Jacob visited Esau, Esau had already moved to Seir. In other words, the events are not presented chronologically. For more on the phenomenon of chronological displacement in the Hebrew Bible, see D. A. Glatt, *Chronological Displacement in Biblical and Related Literatures* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993).

Gen 36:8. It could, therefore, be considered a subscript to the material in Gen 36:2–8, forming an *inclusio* with the first *tôladôt* of Gen 36:1. Whether or not Gen 36:9 was intended as a subscript, it clearly functions as a heading for the second genealogy of Esau. His five sons, Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam, and Korah, are named here, for the second time, after first being mentioned in Gen 36:4–5. Consistent with the pattern we have seen in Genesis, after the *tôladôt* formula in Gen 36:9, the text does not simply resume where the prior *tôladôt* (beginning in Gen 36:1) ended in Gen 36:5. Rather, it repeats the names of Esau's sons and the names of their mothers before listing additional descendants. Thus, the notices in Genesis 36 are related, but not identical to, the dominant *tôladôt* pattern observed in the prior examples.

In sum, not one of the genealogies discussed above, whether or not they strictly follow the ABA'(C)D pattern, simply resumes the preceding narrative. Rather, they combine resumption with forward movement, specifically expansion and addition. That is, in each case, the genealogies exhibit a “step pattern” in which each step overlaps slightly with the previous step. In several instances, the *tôladôt* is also the means by which the author/redactor narrows the focus onto one specific individual named in the previous narrative.²⁴ The *tôladôt* notices, thus, are not simply transitional devices between related blocks of narrative or genealogical materials. They have a specific janus function in that they work in two directions simultaneously: they summarize previous information while introducing new material.

2.3.4. Genesis 2:4

Returning to Gen 2:4, I suggest that, like the other *tôladôt* notices in Genesis, *’ēlleh tôladôt haššamayim wəhā’āreṣ bəhibbār’ām bəyôm ’āsôt yhwēh ’ēlōhīm ’ereš wəšāmāyīm* was intended both as an introduction to the Eden story in Gen 2:5–3:24 and as a summary of the creation account in Gen 1:1–2:3.²⁵ Following the schema established above, text A (A) consists of the first creation account, Gen 1:1–2:3. The recapitulation of selected portions of A (A') are to be found in Gen 2:7, 9, 19, 21–22, namely, the creation of man, the provision of vegetation as food, the creation of the animals, and the creation of woman. Although these events are described differently in the two texts, I consider their appearance in Gen 2:7, 9, 19, 21–22 to be recapitulations of text A because the creations of man, woman, plants, and animals were first introduced in Gen 1:1–2:3. However, they are also included in D, the expansion of select portions of A, because their creation is described in different terms and supplemented with new information.

24. This pattern is also present in the genealogies in Num 3:1 and Ruth 4:18.

25. It is also worth mentioning that the notice in Gen 10:32, “These are the clans of the sons of Noah (*’ēlleh mišpəḥōt bənē nōaḥ*), according to their genealogies (*lātôlêdôtam*), by their nations, and from these the nations were separated on the earth after the flood,” is a summary of Gen 10:1–31.

Thus, unlike the above examples, there would be some overlap between A' (the recapitulation of select portions of A) and D (the expansion of those select portions from A). More precisely, the recapitulation is embedded within the expansion:

A	Text A	Gen 1:1–2:3
B	<i>tôladôt</i>	Gen 2:4
(C)	Intervening verses	none
A'	recapitulation of select portions of A	Gen 2:7, 9, 19, 21–22
D	expansion of selected portions of A with a focus on a specific feature of A plus additional information	Gen 2:5–3:24

Specifically Gen 2:7, 9, 19, 21–22 (A') is a review of Gen 1:11–12, 21b, 24–25, 26–27, 29–30

(A) Gen 1:11–12, 21b, 24–25, 26–27, 29–30

(A') Gen 2:7, 9, 19, 21–22

The specific feature in A on which the following texts, A' and D, focus is the creation of humankind.

The literary features discussed earlier—the similar syntax in Gen 1:1–2 and 2:4a–5, the parallel terms in 2:4a and 1:1 (*br'* and *haššāmayim*) and in 2:4b and 1:1 (*bərē'šît* and *bəyôm*), the reversal of “the heavens and the earth” in 2:4a to “earth and heaven” in 2:4b,²⁶ the use of *br'* in Gen 2:4a but *šh* in Gen 2:4b, and the introduction of the new divine name, Yahweh Elohim—can all be explained as the work of an ingenious redactor who purposefully and artfully linked the two accounts together with the transitional verse 2:4, identifying Elohim who created (*br'*) the heavens and the earth (*haššāmayim wəhā'āreš*) in A with Yahweh, the God of Israel, who made (*šh*) earth and heavens (*'ereš wəšāmāyîm*) in A'/D. Hence, Gen 2:4 functions, as do the other *tôladôt* notices, as the conduit through which the focus narrows from the general to the particular: in this case, from the creation of the universe, which includes the creation of humanity in A, to the creation of humanity and their subsequent history in A'/D. If Gen 2:4 was used in a manner consistent with the other *tôladôt* notices in Genesis, as I have sought to demonstrate, then the final redactor must have intended for the Eden story to be understood as the sequel to Gen 1:1–2:3 rather than a distinct or competing account of creation. This does not, however, resolve the issue of the relative dates of Gen 1:1–2:3 and Gen 2:5–3:24.

26. Perhaps the terms were reversed to form a chiasm. See Ps 148:13 and the comments by E. Otto “Die Paradieserzählung Genesis 2–3: Eine nachpriesterschriftliche Lehrerzählung in ihrem religionshistorischen Kontext,” in “*Jedes Ding hat seine Zeit . . .*”: Studien zur israelitischen und altorientalischen Weisheit. Diethelm Michel zum 65 Geburtstag (ed. A. A. Diesel, et al.; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1996) 187; and Stordalen “Genesis 2, 4,” 175.

Which is the older story? Was one written as a response to and/or a commentary on the other? This question will be addressed in more detail in chapter 5.

2.4. The Structure of Genesis 2:5–3:25

2.4.1. Outline

Now that we have addressed the question of where the Eden story proper begins, we will turn to a discussion of its narrative structure.

I. Paradise Given (2:5–17)

A. Conditions and Solutions (2:5–7)

1. inhospitable conditions (2:5a)
2. reasons for inhospitable conditions (2:5b)
 - a. no water *kî lō' himṭîr Yhwh 'ēlōhîm 'al hā'āreš*
 - b. no worker *wə'ādām 'ayin la'ābōd 'et hā'ādāmāh*
3. solution to inhospitable conditions; preconditions for creation of garden (2:6)
 - a. water: *'ēd* (2:6)
 - b. worker: the creation of *'ādām* (2:7)

B. Creation and Description of the Garden of Eden (2:8–14)

1. God creates garden, home for man (2:8–9)
2. description of rivers (2:10–14)

C. Divine-Human Interaction (2:15–17)

1. Yahweh installs (*nwlh*) man in garden (2:15a)
2. man is to guard and tend the garden
3. *l'obdāh ūlāšāmrah* (2:15b)
4. divine law given (2:16–17)

D. Creation of Corresponding Helper (2:18–25)

1. God's Proclamation: Not Good for Man to Be Alone (2:18)
 - a. creation of animals (2:19)
 - b. naming of animals (2:20a)
 - c. no *'ēzer kənegdō* found (2:20b)
 - d. The *'ēzer kənegdō* (2:21–24)
 - e. woman created (2:21–22)
 - f. the man's proclamation: she is my kin! (2:23)
 - g. all subsequent marriages defined by kinship terms (2:24)
2. Naked But Unashamed (2:25)

II. Paradise Revoked (3:1–24)

A. Serpent's Resume: The Craftiest Creature on Earth (3:1a)

B. Dialogue between the Serpent and the Woman (3:1b–5)

1. serpent (3:1b)
2. woman (3:2–3)
3. serpent (3:4–5)
4. divine law broken (3:6)
 - a. she saw (3:6a)
 - b. she took (3:6b)
 - c. she ate (3:6c)
 - d. she gave (3:6d)
 - e. he ate (3:6e)

C. The Immediate Result (3:7)

1. eyes opened (3:7a)
2. nakedness (3:7b)
3. sewed fig leaves together (3:7c)
4. made (*ʿsh*) loincloth coverings for themselves (3:7d)
- D. Confrontation with God (3:8–13)
 1. man and woman in hiding (3:8)
 2. conversation between God and humans (3:9–13)
 - a. God to man (3:9)
 - b. man to God (3:10)
 - c. God to man (3:11)
 - d. man to God (3:12)
 - e. God to woman (3:13a)
 - f. woman to God (3:13b)
- E. Judgment Handed Down (3:14–19)
 1. Judgment on serpent (3:14–15)
 - a. cursed are you (3:14b)
 - b. you will crawl on your belly (3:14c)
 - c. you will eat dust (3:14d)
 - d. hostility between serpent and humans (3:15)
 2. Judgment on woman: pain in relationships (3:16)
 3. pain in pregnancy and childbearing (3:16ab)
 - a. husband ruling over her (3:16cd)
 4. Judgment on the man (3:17–19)
 5. cursed is the ground (3:17b)
 - a. toil for food (3:17c–19a)
 - b. return to the ground (3:19b–c)
- F. A Brief Reprieve (3:20–21)
 1. Adam names Eve (3:20)
 2. God makes (*ʿsh*) skin garments for Adam and Eve and clothes them (3:21)
- G. Expulsion from the Garden (3:22–24)
 1. God addresses the council: man has become like one of us (3:22)
 2. Adam sent out to work the ground (3:23)
 3. God drove them out (3:24a)
 4. cherubim set as guards (3:24b)

2.4.2. Structure of Genesis 2:5–3:24

The Eden story can be divided into two parts, Gen 2:5–25 and 3:1–24; the division is marked by the disjunctive *waw*²⁷ and the introduction of the serpent in 3:1. The first half of the story can be divided further into two units: the creation of man and the garden in 2:5–17 and the creation of woman in 2:18–25. The second half of the narrative, 3:1–24, consists of three smaller sections: the rebellion in 3:1–19, the naming of Eve and the clothing of Adam and Eve in 3:20–21, and the expulsion from the garden in 3:22–24.

27. The *waw* in Gen 3:1 is disjunctive because it breaks the temporal sequence of *waw*-consecutives that precede.

2.4.2.1. Problem and Solution, Part 1: The Creation of the Garden and Man

Genesis 2:5–7. This first section of the Eden story introduces two conditions problematic to the establishment of a garden: no water (2:5a)²⁸ and no gardener (2:5b). However, 2:6 reports that an *’ēd*²⁹ emerged and watered the entire surface of the ground (*wəhišqāh ’et kol pānê hā’ ādāmāh*). It makes little sense to claim in 2:5 that vegetation could not grow due to lack of water if an *’ēd* was watering the entire surface of the ground, as many English translations indicate.³⁰ Thus, it seems that vv. 5–6 are describing sequential events, which the language *wə’ēd ya’āleh* allows, rather than coterminous states, which the grammar does not require.³¹ In short, *Gen* 2:5–6 indicates that there was no water to support the vegetation until the *’ēd* appeared.

The first problem, the lack of water, was thus resolved by the *’ēd*, which was substantial enough that it watered the entire surface of the ground. Yahweh then responded to the lack of a gardener by creating the man, whose duties to work and till the garden are specified in 2:15. The initial problems solved, that is, the conditions for the creation and maintenance of the garden having been met, the tension is relieved and the story moves forward.

Genesis 2:8–14. Now that there is sufficient water and a man to work the ground, Yahweh plants (*nā’*) the garden in the eastern section of Eden and places the man therein (2:8). Not only can bushes (v. 5, *śīaḥ*) and vegetation (v. 5, *’ēšēb*) now grow, but the transition from hostile and infertile in *Gen* 2:5 to conducive and fertile in *Gen* 2: 8–14 is emphasized by the multitude and variety of beautiful fruit trees growing in the garden, including the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This transition is further highlighted by the additional water source in the garden. Not only is there an *’ēd* watering the ground, but the text reports that a river (*nāhār*) flows continuously from Eden into the garden.³² There, it splits into four rivers³³ that wind through Cush, Ashur, and the rich land of Havilah. This garden is not only a garden of delight, as its name indicates,³⁴ but its

28. “Yahweh had not yet caused it to rain on the earth” (*lō’ himṭîr Yhwh ’ēlōhîm ‘al hā’āreš*, *Gen* 2:5).

29. On the possible translations of *’ēd*, which include “mist,” “cloud,” “spring,” and “subterranean stream,” see Westermann, *Genesis* 1–11, 200–201.

30. ESV, RSV, NIV, NASB, NJPSV, TNK.

31. J. Walsh, “Genesis 2:4b–3:24,” 163, agrees: “The nonexistence of all three is stated in v. 5. In vv. 6–8, first water (the *’ēd*), then man, then vegetation (the garden) appear.”

32. The text does not clarify whether the *nāhār* originates with the *’ēd*.

33. Literally, “headwaters” or “sources” (*rā’šîm*), each of which are referred to as a river (*nāhār*) in *Gen* 2:13–15.

34. See R. S. Hess “Eden: A Well Watered Place,” *BR* 7/6 (1991) 28–33; L. Stager, “Jerusalem and the Garden of Eden” in *Eretz-Israel: Archaeological, Historical and Geographical Studies* (ed. B. A. Levine, et al.; Jerusalem: Israelite Exploration Society, 1999); and A. Millard, “The Etymology of Eden” *VT* 34 (1984) 103–5.

astounding lushness and fertility and its abundant supply of water suggest both divine blessing and divine presence.

Genesis 2:15–17. In Gen 2:5, the man was placed (*šym*) in the garden. Now that the garden is in full bloom, however, he is installed (*nwh*)³⁵ as gardener and protector (2:15b).³⁶ The divine law is then pronounced: the man may certainly eat (*ʾākōl tōʾkēl*) from any tree in the garden, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Disobedience will result in death. Thus, despite the paradisiacal setting in which the man finds himself, this section ends on an ominous note, foreshadowing the events of Genesis 3: Yahweh's words, "for when you eat from it you will surely die" (Gen 2:17), introduce the man's potential demise.

2.4.2.2. *Problem and Solution, Part 2: The Creation of Woman*

The next portion of the text, Gen 2:18–25, focuses on the creation of a corresponding helper (*ʿezer kənegdō*, v.18) for the man. As in the first section, this unit begins with a problem: the man is alone (*lābadō*). In response, Yahweh creates the animals (*kol ḥayyat haššadeh wəʿēt kol ʿōp haššamayim*, v. 19). However, despite the variety of birds and living creatures presented to Adam, there is no corresponding helper among them. In the first example of the problem-solution schema in Gen 2:5–7, the solution was immediate. The absence of rain was resolved by the *ʿēd*, and the lack of a caretaker was resolved by the creation of the man. However, in Gen 2:19–20 satisfaction is delayed, increasing the tension in the story. Only after the inadequacy of the animals is pronounced (*ūlāʾādām lōʾ māšāʾ ʿezer kənegdō*, 2:20) is the tension relieved by the construction (*bnh*, v.22) of the woman. Note that the intensity of Adam's response (v. 23) is evident not only from the content of his exclamation but by the emphasis on "this one," as opposed to the animals, by the repetition of *zōʾt*:

This time (*zōʾt happaʿam*), bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.

This one (*zōʾt*) shall be called woman (*ʾiššāh*),

for from man (*ʾiš*) this one (*zōʾt*) was taken.

As in Gen 2:5–17, Yahweh has solved the problem the story presents. Man is no longer alone. He is now joined in the garden by a fitting companion, this one (*zōʾt*) called woman (*ʾiššāh*), made from his very body (*ʿešem* and *bāšār*).

The final verses (Gen 2:24–25) make two pronouncements. The first defines marriage, using the relationship between Adam and Eve as a model, as

35. For *nwh* as "to install" see §4.7.3, below.

36. Note J. T. Walsh's insight on 2:5–14, "The scene is structured around a triad of motifs: vegetation, water, man. The nonexistence of all three is stated in v. 5. In vv. 6–8, first water (the *ʿēd*), then man, then vegetation (the garden) appear. Vv. 9–15 repeat and embellish the triad: vegetation (trees in the garden; two specific trees); water (the river of Eden [v. 10a]; ultimately the rivers of the world [vv. 10b–14]); man (established in the garden as *ʿōbēd* and *šōmēr*)" (Walsh, "Genesis 2:4b–3:24," 163).

the forging of a new kin unit consisting of a man and his wife. The second defines the state of the relationship between the man and the woman: they stood naked before one another but unashamed. Hence, Gen 2:18–25 ends on a high note. The story has progressed through a series of problems and solutions, ending with the creation of a happy primordial pair whose home is the luxuriant and fruitful garden of God. The bliss, however, is short-lived. The blessed *‘ārûmim* of Gen 2:25 will soon be confronted by the *‘arûm* introduced in 3:1.

2.1.1.3. *Problem → Solution → Problem, Part 3:
Nakedness, Clothing, and Expulsion*

The last division, Gen 3:1–24, can be subdivided, as noted earlier, into three smaller units: 3:1–19, 3:20–21, and 3:22–24.

Genesis 3:1–19. Gen 3:1–24 is the longer of the two primary sections in Gen 2:5–3:24, while Gen 3:1–19 is the longest subunit within that second section. This subsection presents the most significant problem encountered in the entire story. In the first verse, the reader is immediately alerted to a potential threat: “Now the serpent (*wəhannāḥāš*)³⁷ was more crafty than any other living creature of the field.” A dialogue between the serpent and the woman ensues (Gen 3:1b–5), and the subtle and deceptive serpent convinces the woman to taste the forbidden fruit. The following climactic moment of disobedience is conveyed with shocking brevity. What took 20 verses to describe (Gen 2:5–24) is now dismantled in less than a single verse (Gen 3:6b) by the actions recorded in four, short converted *yiqtol* verbs: *wattiqal* (she took), *wattō’kal* (she ate), *wattittēn* (she gave), and *wayyō’kal* (he ate).³⁸

The following verses report the encounter between Yahweh and his disobedient creatures. Note the pattern by which the dialogue in Gen 3:9–13 is reported, where A = Yahweh, B = the man, C = the woman, and D = the serpent:

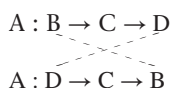
- AB Yahweh to the man (3:9): where are you?
- BA The man to Yahweh (3:10): I heard you, was afraid because I was
 naked,
 I hid
- AB Yahweh to man (3:11): who told you you were naked? Did you
 disobey?
- BA → C The man to Yahweh: *wā’ōkēl*, the woman’s fault (3:12)
- AC → D Yahweh to the woman: *wā’ōkēl*, the serpent’s fault (3:13)

37. Note the disjunctive *waw* that begins the verse, *wəhannāḥāš*, signaling a break in the *waw* consecutive sequence.

38. Walsh notes that these verses (vv. 6–7) are comprised of a couplet (2 + 3, 3 + 3), a single line (3 + 4), and a couplet (3 + 3, 3 + 3), v. 6b (“and he ate”) being highlighted by the concentric structure. He adds, “The departure from the basic 3+3 meter tends to emphasize the final word of the line, ‘and he ate,’” (ibid., 166).

- A → D Yahweh to the serpent (3:14): crawl on belly, eat dust
 A → C Yahweh to the woman (3:15): pain and toil in pregnancy and childbirth, desire for your husband but he will rule over you
 A → B Yahweh to the man (3:16–19): cursed is the ground because of you, with much pain and toil shall you grow food, you will die and return to dust

Yahweh's interrogation begins with the man, who then implicates the woman. The woman then blames the serpent. The overall progression of the conversations can be represented as follows $A : B \rightarrow C \rightarrow D$. Note that the judgments, however, are given in reverse order: $A : D \rightarrow C \rightarrow B$. There seems to be an intentional chiasmic structure in Gen 3:8–19 in which Yahweh's interrogation is countered by the punishment he administers:



Further, this section exhibits *inclusio*. In both Gen 3:8 and Gen 3:19 Yahweh addresses the man, first to question him and then to pronounce judgment. It ends with the same voice with which it began—Yahweh gets the first and final word.

- AB (God and man–2×)
 AC (God and woman)
 AD (God to serpent)
 AC (God to woman)
 AB (God to man)

The structure of this section also demonstrates the balance in Gen 3:8–19. The dialogue between God and the man in Gen 3:9–12 is balanced by the three verses of judgment Yahweh pronounces on the man in Gen 3:17–19.³⁹ The dialogue between Yahweh and the woman is much shorter: only one verse (Gen 3:13), matched by the one verse of judgment in Gen 3:16. The serpent, represented at the peak of the chiasm, is accused in Gen 3:13, but he is not permitted to defend himself. That is, there is no exchange between Yahweh and the serpent as there had been between Yahweh and the humans. Instead, the serpent's guilt is assumed and Yahweh administers judgment immediately in Gen 3:14.

There is also balance on another level: the punishment fits the crime. Because the serpent tempted the woman to *eat* (*'kl*, Gen 3:1) the forbidden fruit, he is penalized with *eating* (*'kl*, Gen 3:14) dust for the rest of his life. Likewise, because the man ate (*'kl*, Gen 3:6) what was prohibited, now only through much pain, toil, and labor will he be able to eat (*'kl* in Gen 3:19).

39. Walsh notes that the punishment consists of a series of balanced poetic lines (3 + 4, 3 + 3, 2 + 2, 2 + 2 + 2, 2 + 2) (*ibid.*, 167).

Although the consequences extend beyond these food-related penalties, there does seem to be a *lex talionis* principle at work in these particular punishments. A similar pronouncement appears in the curse on the man. In Gen 2:7, he was created from the dust of the ground (ʿāpār min hāʾādāmāh). When he dies his body will return to the ground (ʾādāmāh) from which he was taken (Gen 3:23b).

Another reversal is also evident in the description of the serpent. He was introduced in Gen 3:1 as “more crafty than any other living creature of the field” (ʿarûm mikkōl ḥayyat haššādeh), but in Gen 3:14 he is *more cursed* than any beast or any living creature of the field (ʿārûr ʾattāh mikkōl ḥabbəhēmāh ûmikkōl ḥayyat haššādeh). Note specifically the assonance between ʿarûm and ʿārûr which is followed in both cases by the comparative construction *min + kōl + ḥayyat haššādeh*.

Finally, balance is demonstrated in a fourth way by the fact that Yahweh (A), as both prosecutor and judge, is the only one in the account who is engaged at every point in the interrogation and the sentencing. Thus, his centrality to the story and his sovereignty are conveyed even at the structural level of the narrative.

Genesis 3:20–21. Following this climactic moment, the story pauses briefly before it concludes. Adam names his wife *ḥawwah* because she is the mother of all *ḥay* (“the living”). Yahweh also addresses the problem of Adam and Eve’s nakedness. Rather than sending them out of the garden covered only by flimsy foliage, Yahweh makes more durable tunics of animal skin and clothes them. This final pairing of problem with solution within Gen 2:5–3:24 provides a brief reprieve. It appears after the ultimate problem (the rebellion) has been introduced, but before the story ends—with no apparent solution.

Genesis 3:22–24. Yahweh confirms that, indeed, the man has become “like one of us, knowing good and evil” (*hāʾādām ḥāyāh kəʾaḥad mimmennû lādaʿat tōb wārāʿ*). To prevent him from eating from the tree of life, Yahweh banishes Adam and Eve from the garden. He then appoints the cherubim to guard all access to the tree of life. Unlike the other problems presented in Gen 2:5–3:24, the text does not provide an immediate means for restoring the divine-human relationship. The problem-and-solution pattern repeated in Gen 2:5–3:24 now ends *with a problem*. Adam and Eve have been expelled from the garden to avoid an even larger calamity, eating from the tree of life (Gen 3:22).

2.5. Conclusion

Our discussion of Gen 2:5–3:24 began with a basic but significant question: Where does the Eden story begin? By examining the literary ABAʿ(C)D pattern associated with the *tōlādōt* notices in Gen 5:1a; 6:9; 11:27a; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1, 9; and 37:2, I attempted to show that Gen 2:4 (a + b) functioned not only as the conclusion to Gen 1:1–2:3 but also as the introduction

to Gen 2:5–3:24, and as the means by which the redactor narrowed the story's focus from the creation of the world to the creation of humankind. I concluded, thus, that the Eden story proper begins in Gen 2:5 but it is introduced by the *tôladôt* in Gen 2:4.

The literary structure of Gen 2:5–3:24 was then examined and it was seen that each of the three primary sections presents a problem and its solution, with the most significant problem appearing in the third and final division (Gen 3:1–24). Unlike the two preceding sections in Gen 2:5–17 and Gen 2:18–25, Gen 3:1–24 ends without resolution. The gravity of the offense is conveyed not only by the content of Gen 3:1–19, but by the clever use of a rapid succession of converted *yiqtol* forms (Gen 3:6b), chiasm (Gen 3:8–13), *inclusio* (Gen 3:8, 19), balance (Gen 3:8–19, *'kl* in Gen 3:1 and 14, and Gen 3:6 and 19, and *'dm* in Gen 2:7 and 3:23b), and reversal (Gen 3:1, 14). Although there is a brief reprieve in Gen 3:20–21, the story ends in catastrophe: the man and his wife have become like *'ēlōhîm*. Ironically, it is this likeness that estranges them from the divine.

It is clear in Genesis 3 that in eating the forbidden fruit and *becoming like 'ēlōhîm* the man and the woman had transgressed a very significant boundary between the human and divine spheres. In the Mesopotamian *pîṭ pî* and the Egyptian *wpt-r*, however, the opening of the eyes, which signified the image's (re-)birth and the transformation of the image into a living manifestation of an *'el* (Akkadian *ilu*), was precisely the goal.⁴⁰ Although there is a notable difference between the opening of the eyes in Gen 2:5–3:24, which signified the acquisition of illicit wisdom, and the opening of the eyes in the *mis pî pîṭ pî* and *wpt-r*, which indicated the image's vitality, it does seem that the Eden author is playing with the idea of the “opening of the eyes” as a means to life. In his story, however, the outcome is reversed. The man and the woman, who were created and animated prior to the opening of their eyes, now faced banishment, exile, decay, and eventual death.

The following chapter will present a summary and analysis of these rituals by which Mesopotamian and Egyptian divine images were created, animated, and installed. In chapter 4, I will then reexamine the Eden story, specifically, the creation of humankind, in light of the Washing of the Mouth and the Opening of the Mouth rituals.

40. As I will discuss in §4.7.5, below, it is here that we see a sharp distinction between the Eden story and the comparative texts, and, hence, between human beings in Gen 2:5–3:24 and divine manifestations in the *mis pî pîṭ pî* and *wpt-r*. Although Gen 2:5–3:24 may incorporate selected features of divine statue animation rituals, it clearly distinguishes between the man and the woman, on the one hand, and Elohîm, on the other.

Chapter 3

The Creation of a Divine Statue in the Ancient Near East: The Mesopotamian mīs pī pīt pī and the Egyptian wpt-r

3.1. Introduction

The opening chapter introduced the two sets of ritual texts with which the Eden story will be compared. These texts, the Mesopotamian Washing of the Mouth and Opening of the Mouth (*mīs pī* and *pīt pī*) rituals and the Opening of the Mouth ceremony (*wpt-r*) from Egypt, will be the focus of the current chapter. After providing a brief orientation to the *mīs pī pīt pī*, I will review the primary sources and the previous studies on the Mesopotamian Washing of the Mouth and Opening of the Mouth ceremonies. I will then summarize the ritual itself. This will be followed by a reanalysis of the creation imagery in the *mīs pī pīt pī* in which I will demonstrate that the production of a divine statue in Mesopotamia was achieved through two complementary and requisite processes: birth *and* manufacture. The next section of the chapter will focus on the Egyptian Opening of the Mouth (*wpt-r*) ritual. After an introduction, discussion of sources and previous studies, and a summary of the *wpt-r*, I will demonstrate in my analysis of the ritual that, despite the many obvious differences between the Egyptian and Mesopotamian texts, the *wpt-r* also presents the creation of a divine image in terms of birth and manufacture. Discussion of the relevance of these texts to the Eden story will be reserved for chapter 4, only after I have examined and interpreted the *wpt-r* and the *mīs pī* and *pīt pī* in their own right.

3.2. The Mouth Washing and Opening Ritual in Mesopotamia

3.2.1. Brief Orientation to the mīs pī pīt pī

In ancient Mesopotamia, the creation, animation, and installation of a divine statue in its temple was a complex task requiring a skilled set of craftsmen and priests. The materials used to manufacture the image and the ritual spaces in which the creative activity took place had to be prepared

and purified according to strict, confidential¹ guidelines. After the image was created it had to be “brought to life” through the appropriate incantations and rituals, dressed, adorned with the proper insignia, installed in its temple, and fed its first meal before it could be effective.

The rituals outlining these procedures and the accompanying incantations are known collectively by the Babylonian titles *mīs pî* (“washing of the mouth”) and *pīt pî* (“opening of the mouth”). The *mīs pî*, as noted earlier, was primarily a ritual intended to purify the recipient in preparation for cultic activity.² As Walker and Dick conclude, “the ‘washing of the mouth’ was essentially a purification rite which prepared the object/person for contact with the divine. It washed away impurities.”³ The *mīs pî* was performed not only on divine statues but also on the king and his royal insignia, royal statues, priests, individual humans, and various animals and sacred objects.⁴ By contrast, the mouth-opening rite (*pīt pî*) was apparently reserved for inanimate objects, including figurines and larger divine images, a leather bag, cult symbols, and royal jewels.⁵ It was thought to consecrate, activate, and/or enliven the object in preparation for cultic use. When applied to a divine statue, the Opening of the Mouth was thought to animate the statue’s sensory organs and limbs, enabling it to consume offerings, smell incense, and move freely.⁶ Once the mouth washing and opening were complete, the statue was considered a fully functioning, living manifestation of the divine.⁷

As Walker and Dick note, it was apparently standard ritual procedure that the mouth-opening of a divine statue was preceded by a mouth-washing.⁸ However, not all mouth-washings, such as those performed on humans,

1. The Babylon version of the *mīs pî pīt pî* ends, “The initiate may show it to the initiate. The uninitiated may not see it. Taboo of the great Enlil, Marduk” (*mūdû mūdâ likallim la mūdû laimmar ikkib Enlil rabî Marduk*) in C. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia: The Mesopotamian Mīs Pî Ritual* (Helsinki: University of Helsinki Press, 2001) 73, 77, 82 line 66.

2. Ibid., 10–13, 16; A. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder: Herstellung und Einweihung von Kultbildern in Mesopotamien und die alttestamentliche Bilderpolemik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998) 187.

3. Ibid., 12.

4. Ibid., 10–11, 13.

5. Ibid., 13–14; A. Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth: The Consecration of Divine Images in Mesopotamia,” in *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (ed. K. van der Toorn; Leuven: Peeters, 1997) 45.

6. As indicated in Incantation Tablet 3, “This statue cannot smell incense without the ‘Opening of the Mouth’ ceremony. It cannot eat food nor drink water,” in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 140–41, 151 lines 70–71.

7. See I. Winter, “Idols of the King: Royal Images as Recipients of Ritual Action in Ancient Mesopotamia,” *JRS* 6 (1992) 14; T. Jacobsen, “The Graven Image” in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (ed. P. Hanson et al.; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987) 16–18; Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth,” 46; and Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 6–7.

8. Ibid., 14.

animals, and sacred objects, were followed by a mouth-opening. Thus, the *mis pî* seems to have been a ritual distinct from the *pîṭ pî*. However, in the case of the creation of a divine statue specifically, both rituals were necessary, as demonstrated by the *mis pî* and the *pîṭ pî* texts themselves. In the earlier version from Nineveh, both phrases *mis pî* and *pîṭ pî* appear together throughout the ritual texts, but in the later Babylon version the phrase “*pîṭ pî*” is unattested. It seems, therefore, that at some point in the ritual’s history, and perhaps only in certain versions of the ritual, both acts were subsumed under the single title of *mis pî*, which then referred to the washing and the opening of the mouth. This may be explained by the fact that the washing of the mouth was necessarily performed first—the statue had to be purified before it could be brought to life. The absence of *pîṭ pî* from the Babylon version does not mean, however, that the statue’s mouth was washed but not opened. Walker and Dick comment:

The fact that the BR (Babylon Version) retains such incantations as those in Tablet 3⁹ shows that mouth-opening has not been completely suppressed from the ritual. . . . It is noteworthy that in BBS XXXVI iv 27 (mid 9th century B.C.E.) Nabû-apla-iddina is only said to wash the statue’s mouth, not to open it. In view of the fact that STT 200 presents the mouth-washing as a preliminary to the more important mouth-opening, it seems unlikely that Nabû-apla-iddina would not in fact also have opened the statue’s mouth. So this passage would seem to be early evidence for the naming of the whole ritual as “mouth washing.”¹⁰

It is still not clear, however, whether the washing of the mouth and the opening of the mouth, when performed on divine statues, were considered two parts of one longer ritual or two distinct rituals.¹¹ It is noteworthy that neither version demonstrates a linear progression from mouth-washing to mouth-opening, and that in the Nineveh version neither the *mis pî* nor the *pîṭ pî* is ever mentioned separately.¹² Each of the five times the phrase *mis pî* appears, it is always immediately followed by *pîṭ pî* in the following phrase: *mis pî pîṭ pî teppuṣ*, “you perform Mouth-Washing (and) Mouth-Opening.”¹³ This does not answer the question whether or not the *mis pî*, when applied

9. The incantations in Tablet 3 to which Walker and Dick refer are for the opening of the mouth, ears, and nose. The Opening of the Mouth is mentioned explicitly on pp. 140–41, 151 lines 70ab, 73a.

10. Ibid., 17. In BBR 100:9, the mouth of a god is washed so that he can communicate more clearly. It is unlikely that the activation of the mouth, something that typically occurs in the *pîṭ pî*, indicates that the terms *mis pî* and *pîṭ pî* were interchangeable. Rather, a clean mouth was necessary for communication with the divine. See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 13.

11. Whether the rituals were thought of as distinct or as two components of a larger rite may have changed over time as well.

12. The phrase *mis pî* is restored in *ibid.*, 54 line 24 (day 1). If this is accurate, then there is one example from day 1 in which *mis pî* is mentioned alone.

13. Ibid., 57 line 58; 60 lines 104 and 108; 64 line 150; and 64–65 line 161.

to a divine statue, was conceived of as a ritual distinct from the *pīt pî* or not, but it does demonstrate that a god's mouth could not be opened without first being washed.¹⁴ Thus, both the *mīs pî* and the *pīt pî*, in that order, were necessary for the creation of a divine image. However, rather than use *mīs pî* as a general title to refer to both the washing and the opening of the mouth, as the Babylon version of the ritual and much of the secondary literature does, henceforth I will distinguish between the two ritual acts. The term *mīs pî* will be reserved for the preliminary washing and purification of the divine image, while *pīt pî* will be used specifically for the rituals of animation and activation. When referring to the ritual as a whole, I will use *mīs pî pīt pî*, as in the Nineveh version.

3.2.2. Primary Sources and Historical References

Fortunately, many of the *mīs pî pīt pî* tablets and their accompanying incantations have survived. They were discovered at Nineveh, Assur, Huzirīna (Sultantepe), Hama (Syria), Babylon, Sippar, Nippur, Kalḫu (Nimrud), and Uruk, and they range in date from the mid-9th to 5th centuries B.C.E.¹⁵ These texts may be relatively recent attestations of a much older tradition: additional, albeit few, historical references to the washing and/or opening of the mouth are found as early as the Ur III period, when the rite was performed on a statue (or on multiple statues) of Gudea, the deified king of Lagash.¹⁶ The ritual is mentioned briefly in an Old Babylonian text from Mari, where the purification god, Indagra, is credited with performing mouth-opening rites,¹⁷ and in a Middle Babylonian list, dating between the mid-14th and mid-13th centuries B.C.E., which mentions that a mouth-washing ceremony was performed on various articles of clothing, several copper vessels, select pieces of furniture, two oxen, and two slave girls.¹⁸

14. If the statue had already been consecrated, its mouth could be washed to enable it to "speak" more clearly without then being opened again, as in BBR 100:9 and the copy BR 11 iv 20. See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 11.

15. See *ibid.*, 27–29 and n. 96, where they cite possible 3rd and 2nd millennium B.C.E. sources.

16. *Ibid.*, 18–20; and Winter, "Idols of the King." The fact that the texts are bilingual in both Sumerian and Akkadian also suggests that they belong to a much older tradition, going back to the 3rd millennium B.C.E. See I. Winter, "Opening the Eyes and Opening the Mouth: The Utility of Comparing Images in Worship in India and the Ancient Near East" in *Ethnography and Personhood: Notes from the Field* (ed. Michael W. Meister; Jaipur: Rawat, 2000) 135.

17. *Ibid.*, 21. The relevant lines are published in M. Civil, "The sign LAK 384," *Or* 52/2 (1983) 238; and more recently in P. Michalowski, "The Torch and the Censer," in *The Tablet and the Scroll: Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William W. Hallo* (ed. Mark Cohen, Daniel Snell, and David Weisberg; Bethesda: CDL, 1993) 158, where they are transliterated and translated as follows: "indagra sānga utaḥ-ḫé kur-ta ka-du₈-ù dingir-re-e-ne-ke₄," "Indagra, the purifier, who (performs the) mouth opening rites of the gods."

18. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 21–22. The text, HS 165, is published in J. Aro, *Mittelbabylonische Kleidertexte der Hilprecht-Sammlung Jena* (Sitzungsberichte der sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig: Philologisch-historische Klasse, 115/2; Berlin:

An additional reference, in which a new divine statue of Šamaš was commissioned, dates to the mid-9th century B.C.E.¹⁹ during the reign of Nabû-apla-iddina, king of Babylon.²⁰ Through divine revelation, the king received a replica in baked clay of the original divine statue of Šamaš, and he was charged with overseeing its construction. The text reports:²¹

- | | |
|--|--|
| 12. <i>ana DÛ-eš šal-mi šú-a-tu₄</i> | To the fashioning of that image |
| 13. <i>ú-zu-un-šú ib-ši-ma</i> | his (Nabû-nādin-šumi's) attention was directed, and so, |
| 14. <i>ina né-me-qí šá^dÉ-a</i> | by the skill of Ea |
| 15. <i>ina ši-pir^dNIN.ÍLDU</i> | by the craft of Ninildu, |
| 16. <i>^dKUG.SIG₁₇.BÀNDA-da</i> | Kusibanda, |
| 17. <i>^dNIN.KUR.RA^dNIN.ZA.DIM</i> | Ninkurra (and) Ninzadim, |
| 18. <i>ina^rKUG.SIG₁₇ ru-uš-ši-i^r</i> | with reddish gold (and) |
| 19. <i>^{na₄}ZA.GÌN eb-bi</i> | lustrous lapis-lazuli he properly prepared ²² |
| 20. <i>ša-lam^dUTU EN GAL</i> | the image of Šamaš, the great lord. |
| 21. <i>ki-niš ú-kan-ni</i> | |
| 22. <i>ina te-lil-ti</i> | By the purification rite |
| 23. <i>šá^dÉ-a u^dASAL.LÚ.ĤI</i> | of Ea and Asarluḫi |
| 24. <i>ma-ḥar^drUTU^r</i> | before Šamaš |
| 25. <i>'ina^r É.KAR.ZA.GÌN.NA</i> | in the Ekarzagina ²³ |
| 26. <i>^ršá^r GÚ^{id}Pu-rat-^rti^r</i> | which is on the bank of the Euphrates |
| 27. <i>pi-šú im-si-^rma^r</i> | he washed its mouth and |
| 28. <i>ir-ma-a šu-bat-^rsu^r</i> | there (the statue) took up its residence. |

Akademie-Verlag, 1970) 7. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 184) concludes that the slave girls were offerings given on the occasion of the mouth-washing ritual but that they themselves were not the objects of the ritual.

19. On the authenticity of the text, see C. Woods, "The Sun-God Tablet of Nabu-apla-iddina Revisited," *JCS* 56 (2004): 23–103, esp. p. 89.

20. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 22–24. The most recent and definitive edition is that of Woods, "The Sun-God Tablet," 23–103. See also A. Hurowitz, "The Solar Calendar of Nabu-apla-iddina, King of Babylon" (Hebrew), in *Eretz-Israel: Archaeological, Historical and Geographical Studies* (Hayim and Miriam Tadmor Volume)(ed. I. Eph'al, A. Ben-Tor, and P. Machinist; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 2003) 27:91–109.

21. The transliteration and translation are taken from Woods, "The Sun-God Tablet," 83–89.

22. "He properly prepared" is a translation of line 21.

23. *É-kar-za-gìn-na* can be translated, "House of the Quay of Lapis Lazuli" or "House of the Quay of Splendor." See Woods, "The Sun-God Tablet," 94. It was located within the temple precinct in Babylon, between the Esagil and the Euphrates River. See A. R. George, *Babylonian Topographical Texts* (Leuven: Peeters and Departement Orientalistiek, 1992) 300–303.

A subsequent reference to the *mīs pī pīt pī* is found in a Neo-Assyrian letter written to inform the king that a group of statues had been renewed and consecrated via the washing of their mouths. The relevant text reads, "I renewed the statues in the house of Bal(a)ṭayu (and) performed the 'mouth-washing' ceremony (KA.LUḪ.Û.DAH)." ²⁴ The letter may be linked to Esarhaddon's "Renewal of the Gods," ²⁵ in which he claims to have restored the divine statues of Babylon to their rightful homes after his father, Sennacherib, devastated the city and its temples in 698 B.C.E. ²⁶ The gods were said to be "born" (*im-ma-al-du*) ²⁷ in the Ešarra, the Temple of Aššur, and then transported to Babylon in a great procession. Esarhaddon claims, "Into the midst of Babylon, the city of their honor, joyfully I had them enter. In the groves of fruit trees, orchards, canals, and gardens of Ekarzagina, a pure place, through the knowledge of the experts, (through the rituals of) Washing of the Mouth, Opening of the Mouth, washing and purifying before the sta[r]s of the heavens]—(before) the gods [Ea], Šamaš, Asariluḫi." ²⁸ A final reference to the *mīs pī pīt pī* describes the restoration of a divine statue in Babylon by Ashurbanipal's brother, Šamaš-šum-ukin. It refers, as does Esarhaddon's "Renewal of the Gods," to a mouth-washing and mouth-opening ceremony performed in the gardens of the Ekarzagina. ²⁹

3.2.3. Previous Studies

Portions of the *mīs pī pīt pī* texts were first published by H. Zimmern in 1896–1901. ³⁰ He recognized that the mouth-washing and mouth-opening ceremony was the means by which a newly crafted or refurbished divine statue was ritually purified and enabled to receive offerings of food and drink. ³¹ Several years later, A. Blackman published S. Langdon's English

24. Simo Parpola, *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal*, part 1: *Texts* (AOAT 5/1; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 2007) no. 188.

25. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 25–27 and 25 n. 78. The text is published in R. Borger, *Die Inschriften Asarhaddons, Königs von Assyrien* (AfOB 9; Graz, 1956) §53, AsBbA Rs. 2–38; and more recently in B. N. Porter, *Images, Power and Politics: Figurative Aspects of Esarhaddon's Babylonian* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1993) 145.

26. *Ibid.*, 24.

27. *Ibid.*, 26 n. 88.

28. *Ibid.*, 145. The statue of Marduk was installed in Babylon by Esarhaddon's son, Aššurbanipal, in 669 B.C.E., the first year of his rule. See *ibid.*, 147–48 and n. 311; and M. Streck, *Aššurbanipal und die letzten assyrischen Könige bis zum Untergange Niniveh's* (Vorderasiatische Bibliothek 7; Stück, Leipzig: Zentralantiquariat, 1916) 2:396 n. 2.

29. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 27. The texts are published in Streck, *Aššurbanipal* lines 264–69 lines 19–22, and are translated in D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1926) 2:381–82 §989.

30. H. Zimmern, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Babylonischen Religion* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1901) nos. 3–38.

31. *Ibid.*, 959, 963. In a later article, he compared the Babylon "opening of the mouth" to consecration rituals in the Mandaean cult, attempting to demonstrate that communion among the Mandaeans originated in the Babylon mouth-washing and mouth-opening rites (*ibid.*, 965–66). Furthermore, he suggested that the Christian Lord's Supper was also in

translation of BBR 31–37, a mouth-washing and mouth-opening ritual text first published by Zimmern in 1901.³² The publication was part of Blackman's own study, in which he compared the Babylonian version of the "Opening of the Mouth" to the Egyptian ritual known by the same title (*wpt-r*), and suggested that there may have been a historical relationship between the two. He listed several features shared by the two mouth-opening rituals, such as the fumigation of the statue, the use of colored cloth, the feeding of the image, and the use of tools to open the image's mouth, but he offered no significant analysis of the Egyptian rite nor of the Babylon *mis pî pî pî pî*. The following year, S. Smith published a translation and commentary of another cuneiform ritual tablet, B.M. 45759.³³ Although this was a nearly complete copy of the Babylon mouth-washing and mouth-opening, Smith offered no substantial analysis of the ritual.

A much improved version of the *mis pî pî pî pî* texts was produced by E. Ebeling in 1931,³⁴ although his interpretation of the ritual was criticized by von Soden³⁵ and more recently by Berlejung because he interpreted it in light of the much later Hellenistic mystery religions.³⁶ In this same volume, Ebeling also published Nr 27, a text found by the German excavations at Assur, which deals with the ritual renewal of a damaged divine statue.³⁷

In the late 1930s, G. Meier published an article entitled "Die Ritualtafel der Serie 'Mundwaschung,'" in which he presents a text for the mouth-washing of a king.³⁸ Much of the text is missing, but what remains includes many of the instructions for the preparation of the ritual performance. A royal garment ([. . . *lubušt*]i *šarri*), a royal scepter (¹⁵*ḫatti šar[ri]*), a necklace of precious stones ([. . . *abnê*]^m) *šá kisâd šarri*), and a crown (*agâ šar[ri]*)³⁹ are placed near the palace gate, holy-water basins are arranged in the house of Kusu ([. . . *agub*]b^{meš} *ina bît* ⁴*kù-sù t[u-kan. . .]*), and later in the text, the priest prepares a second royal garment (*lubušti šarri*), the king's throne (¹⁵*kussi šarri*), and a second "chair for the ritual (of the series) mouth

some way historically linked, through the Mandeans, to the mouth-washing and mouth-opening rituals of Babylon (ibid., 967).

32. A. M. Blackman, "The Rite of Opening the Mouth in Ancient Egypt and Babylonia," *JEA* 10 (1924) 47–59.

33. S. Smith, "The Babylonian Ritual for the Consecration and Induction of a Divine Statue," *JRAS* (1925) 37–60.

34. E. Ebeling, *Tod und Leben: Nach den Vorstellungen der Babylonier* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1931) 102–10, 338–49.

35. W. von Soden, "Review of: Ebeling, Erich. *Tod und Leben nach den Vorstellungen der Babylonier*," *Orientalische Literaturzeitung* 37 (1934): 411–20, esp. pp. 416–20.

36. See the comments of Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 193.

37. E. Ebeling, *Tod und Leben*. For the most recent edition of this text and commentary, see Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, Appendix A, 228–45.

38. G. Meier "Die Ritualtafel der Serie 'Mundwaschung,'" *Archiv für Orientforschung* 12 (1937–39) 40–45.

39. *Garment*: K 6818 line 4. *Scepter*: K 6818 line 4. *Necklace*: K 6818 line 5. *Crown*: K 6818 line 5.

washing" (*ù¹⁸kussi šá ni-pi-ši ka-luḥ-ù-da*).⁴⁰ The priest then offers sacrifices and recites incantations to various deities, most of whose names are missing.⁴¹ The king is presented with his radiant tiara (*[aga me-l]-ám-a-ni*), a weapon "clothed with glory" (*gis¹⁸t[ukul i]m-gal-a ri-a*), a long bow (*gis¹⁸gešbu á-gíd-da*), a staff (*ši-pir-ra*), the aforementioned stone necklace, the scepter, and the bow, and puts them on the throne.⁴² He then prostrates himself and enters the palace. The text ends with an incantation about the king's merciful act of saving a bird. Because the king preserved the life of the bird, "a creation [of the gods]" (*bi-nu-ut* [^d. . .]),⁴³ he pleads with Šamaš to save him, "I am a human being, creation of the god(s) []" (*ana-ku a-mi-lu-tu bi-nu-ut* ^d. . . [^d. . .])⁴⁴, and to grant him life: "As I gave life to this bird, so give life to me!" (*ki-i šá ana iššuri an-ni-i na-piš-ta a-[qa-šu] ia-a-ši na-piš-ti qí-šá*).⁴⁵ Thus, it seems that in this case the *mīs pī pīt pī* was a "rebirth" of the king whereby he was ritually renewed for office.

In his thesis of 1966, Christopher Walker provided the most complete edition of the *mīs pī pīt pī* tablets and incantations to date.⁴⁶ However, he offered no substantial interpretation of the ritual itself. A year later, M. Civil commented on the mouth-washing and mouth-opening texts found at Sultantepe, but, like his predecessors, he offered little in the way of explanation.⁴⁷

Additional tablets belonging to the Mesopotamian mouth-washing and mouth-opening rituals, texts 2.30030/3 and duplicates of W.20030/5 and W.20030/98, were published by W. Mayer in 1978.⁴⁸ He recognized several striking similarities between these texts and Ebeling's TuL Nr 27, such as a similar order of events and phrases that were unique to this set of texts. He was less interested, however, in explaining the ritual procedures.

The first major attempt to interpret the Babylon and Assyrian *mīs pī pīt pī* was published by T. Jacobsen in 1987.⁴⁹ Building on the work of E. Ebe-

40. I discuss the purification goddess Kusu below. K 6818 line 7. *Second royal garment*: K 9729 + 13285 + Rm 113 Obverse line 15. *Throne*: K 9729 + 13285 + Rm 113 Obverse line 15. *Second chair*: K 9729 + 13285 + Rm 113 Obverse line 16.

41. K 9729 + 13285 + Rm 113 Obverse lines 23–29.

42. *Tiara*: K 9729 + 13285 + Rm 113 Reverse line 5. *Weapon*: K 9729 + 13285 + Rm 113 Reverse line 6. *Bow*: K 9729 + 13285 + Rm 113 Reverse line 7. *Staff*: K 9729 + 13285 + Rm 113 Reverse line 8. *Putting them on the throne*: K 9729 + 13285 + Rm 113 Reverse lines 10–11.

43. K 9729 + 13285 + Rm 113 Reverse line 17.

44. K 9729 + 13285 + Rm 113 Reverse line 18.

45. K 9729 + 13285 + Rm 113 Reverse lines 22–23.

46. C. Walker, *Material for a Reconstruction of the mīs pī Ritual* (B.Phil. thesis, Oxford University, 1966).

47. M. Civil, "Remarks on Sumerian and Bilingual Texts," *JNES* 26 (1967) 200–211, esp. p. 211.

48. W. R. Mayer, "Seleukidische Rituale aus Warka mit Emesal-Gebeten," *Or* n.s. 47 (1978) 431–458, esp. pp. 443–58.

49. Jacobsen, "The Graven Image".

ling, Jacobsen understood the texts as a ritual-birthing procedure. The tamarisk trough (*bugimmu*), which figured prominently in the Babylon version, represented a mother's womb into which Ea's semen, represented by the holy water, was poured, along with all the necessary ingredients to form the deity.⁵⁰ Tamarisk wood (*bīnu*), known generally as the material from which gods were made, and more specifically as the substance from which the bones of the Igigi were created, would have formed the statue's frame.⁵¹ The gold, perhaps understood as skin, would have overlaid the wooden core. The eyes and other organs would have been formed from the precious stones.⁵² During the night, the divine embryo, surrounded by the various craftsmen deities who aided in its birth, was then conceived in the trough, where it gestated overnight, and was born on the birthing brick the next day.⁵³

M. Dietrich provided a subsequent summary and interpretation of the *mīs pī pīt pī*, agreeing with Jacobsen that the ritual celebrated the image's birth.⁵⁴ This notion was taken up and elaborated on by Peg Boden in her dissertation *The Mesopotamian Washing of the Mouth (Mīs pī) Ritual: An Examination of Some of the Social and Communication Strategies Which Guided the Development and Performance of the Ritual Which Transferred the Essence of the Deity Into Its Temple Statue*. Through the application of van Gennep's *rites de passage*,⁵⁵ Boden sought to demonstrate that the Babylon version was a tripartite ritual of transition based on the allegory of human gestation and birth.⁵⁶ She states:

The allegory of gestation and birth is a guiding thread throughout the ritual. Physical procreation is used as the model for the ritual in an effort to realize the abstract concepts of the deity actually coming to life and dwelling among mortals. The guiding model for the treatment of the temple statue . . . is one of natural procreation, recalling the mysterious

50. Ebeling, *Tod und Leben*, 100–108 and Jacobsen, "The Graven Image," 25–26. See also Jacobsen, "The Graven Image," 110–16, esp. p. 111, where he discusses the relationship between water and male semen in Sumerian thought.

51. See Walker, *Material for a Reconstruction*, 43; CAD B 240; and Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 79 line 26; 100 line 4 and n. 70.

52. M. Dietrich suggested that the gems, gold, and silver placed in the trough would have functioned not only as the raw material from which the image was crafted, but also as jewelry for the statue's adornment ("Der Werkstoff wird Gott: Zum mesopotamischen Ritual der Umwandlung eines leblosen Bildwerks in einen lebendigen Gott." *MAR* 7 [1992]: 105–26 119).

53. Jacobsen, "The Graven Image," 25–26.

54. M. Dietrich, "Der Werkstoff wird Gott," esp. pp. 119–20.

55. A. van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961).

56. P. J. Boden, *The Mesopotamian Washing of the Mouth (mīs pī) Ritual: An Examination of Some of the Social and Communication Strategies Which Guided the Development and Performance of the Ritual Which Transferred the Essence of the Deity Into Its Temple Statue* (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1998) ii, 170–71, 172, 220, 222.

forces of nature which allow reproduction and placing them in the religious context of spiritual procreation.⁵⁷

Walker and Dick originally adopted Boden's analysis, but in a more recent publication, they modified their position based on the work of A. Berlejung.⁵⁸ The merits of Boden's thesis that the washing and opening of the mouth was a ritual of gestation and birth and of Berlejung's analysis, in which she concludes, contrary to Boden, that the *mis pî pî pî* was primarily a ritual of purification, will be discussed below.

In two recent works, A. Berlejung has presented a summary and an insightful analysis of the ritual: in an article, "Washing the Mouth: The Consecration of Divine Images in Mesopotamia," in *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, and more fully in her published dissertation, *Die Theologie der Bilder: Herstellung und Einweihung von Kultbildern in Mesopotamien und die alttestamentliche Bilderpolemik*. The most comprehensive transliteration and translation of the mouth-washing texts, *The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia: The Mesopotamian Mis pî Ritual*, was published in 2001 by Christopher Walker and Michael Dick. The following summary in §3.2.4 is based primarily on these three excellent treatments of the Nineveh and Babylon mouth-washing and mouth-opening rituals.⁵⁹

Finally, the latest treatment of the *mis pî pî pî* is by N. Levtow.⁶⁰ He examines the ritual in the context of a larger work on the biblical idol polemics, concluding that the latter were written as sociopolitically conditioned responses to Israel's exilic environment. The exilic biblical authors, he claims, understood the ritual activation of the image, and they used this knowledge in a "precision attack against the efficacy of the very ritual (the *mis pî*) that empowered their [Mesopotamia's] cults and king."⁶¹ If Levtow is correct, then this would establish a genetic relationship between the idol polemics and the mouth-washing and mouth-opening rituals, something which M. Dick has already suggested for Isaiah 40 and 44, as I discussed in chapter 1.

In what follows, I will first present a summary of the course of the ritual. I will then revisit the idea that the *mis pî pî pî* is concerned with the ritual

57. Ibid., 170–71.

58. C. Walker and M. B. Dick, "The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia: The Mesopotamian *mis pî* Ritual," in *Born in Heaven, Made on Earth: The Making of a Cult Image in the Ancient Near East* (ed. M. B. Dick; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999) 76, 116–17; idem, *The Induction*, 29. Berlejung, "Washing the Mouth," 68–72; idem, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 137–38 and 237–32.

59. My analysis and interpretation of the *mis pî pî pî* as a ritual of both divine birth and divine manufacture will be discussed in the following section.

60. N. B. Levtow, *Images of Others: Iconic Politics in Ancient Israel* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008).

61. Ibid., 100.

birth of the statue. This will include a synopsis of Boden's position followed by a brief review of Berlejung's critical response. My assessment of the birthing imagery in the Washing of the Mouth and the Opening of the Mouth will then be offered, including a reevaluation of two items that have featured prominently in the discussion: the *buginnu* trough and the brick of Dingir-maḫ. The evidence will suggest that the mouth-washing and mouth-opening ritual is not exclusively a rite of purification, as Berlejung claims, nor it is founded solely on the analogy with human birth, as Boden argues. Rather, it is based on two complementary analogies: human procreation and birth, *and* material manufacture. These two analogies, when combined, account for both human and divine involvement in the creative process and explain how the divine statue was physically constructed yet also divinely created.

3.2.4. Summary of the *mīs pī pīt pī*

Although much of the ritual can be reconstructed from the available sources, it must be said from the outset that even summarizing the *mīs pī pīt pī* is difficult.⁶² Many of the tablets have suffered significant damage, and portions of the text are missing. There are also several incantations cited by incipit which are no longer extant, and thus the particulars of those ritual acts are lost. Furthermore, as detailed as the surviving incantations are, they do not supply all of the directions or explanations for the ritual procedures. What remains ambiguous to modern interpreters would have been understood by the Assyrian and Babylonian priests responsible for washing and opening the divine statue's mouth. Moreover, variations among the sources testify to the fact that the *mīs pī pīt pī* ritual had not been standardized in canonical form.⁶³ More than one form of the ritual was found at Nineveh, and several incantations used in the Nineveh version from Sultantepe were not included in the Babylon version.⁶⁴

Despite these limitations, a substantial portion of the mouth-washing and mouth-opening ceremony, including many details of the ritual acts involved, can be reconstructed from the surviving texts. These texts provide a fairly clear picture of the ritual's overall objective: to create and consecrate a divine image, or "god," so that it could function properly in its ritual context.

3.2.4.1. Day One: Nineveh Version (Nineveh II.1–54)

3.2.4.1.1. Preparation in the City, in the "Countryside," in the Garden, and in the Temple

The first section of the Nineveh version of the *mīs pī pīt pī* concerns the preparation of four separate areas of ritual activity in which the washing

62. See also the excellent summary by Berlejung in her two contributions cited above, "Washing the Mouth," 51–68; and *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 212–47.

63. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 17.

64. *Ibid.*

and opening of the mouth will take place: the city, the “countryside” (*šēru*), an orchard (*kīrû*), and the temple (*bītu*) itself.⁶⁵

Once the priest had determined that the timing for the *mīs pī pīt pī* was favorable to the gods,⁶⁶ he left the city and went to a designated orchard (*kīrû*), located along a riverbank in the countryside (*šēru*),⁶⁷ to begin preparations. The priest set up a marker indicating the direction of sunrise to ensure that he would later place the statue correctly in this same position, facing the rising sun. He returned to the city where he prepared and inspected various materials for their purity. His next task was to construct in the countryside reed-huts for Ea, Šamaš, Asalluḫi, the purification goddesses Kusu and Ningirim,⁶⁸ and the birth-goddess Dingirmaḫ, while reciting the appropriate incantations. One of the incantations that likely accompanied these preparations centered on establishing the purity of the reeds used to construct the *buginnu*, a watertight reed container, and the *urigallu*, a standard or ritual hut, also made of reeds.⁶⁹

65. The divisions are taken from Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth,” 51–52 and 1998: 212–13. They are indicated in the texts themselves by changes in the location of the ritual performance.

66. The *mīs pī pīt pī* texts themselves do not specify how this was determined. See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 52 n. 34.

67. The term *šēru* refers to the fields, open country, or steppe located beyond the city walls. This area was considered dangerous and highly unstable, not only because it was home to wild animals, nomads, enemies, and even, the ancients believed, demons, but also because it contained the threshold to the underworld, the point of transition between life and death, where one could easily become contaminated. See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 52 n. 36, which cites the diagram in B. Pongratz-Leisten, *Ina Šulmi Īrūb: Die kulttopographische und ideologische Programmatik der akītu-Prozession in Babylonien und Assyrien im 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr* (Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern, 1994) 18–19, 36; Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth,” 53–54; idem, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 27–30, 217; and Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung*, 124. See also CAD C 145–46g, which lists *šēru* as “the haunt of demons,” and CAD S 146h, which defines it as “a locality where rituals are performed.” The *šēru* may have been considered a particularly dangerous area for the divine image and ultimately for the city and its inhabitants, because the security of the *mes*, the means by which the gods maintained the stability and order of civilization, was threatened while in the *šēru*.

68. *Ea*: It is worth noting for the discussion in chap. 5 that Ea, the divine craftsman and patron god of metalsmiths, was named repeatedly in the *mīs pī* texts as the father of the image. See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 57 lines 61, 63; and p. 65 lines 179–86. He is also the creator of the first humans in *Atra-ḫasis* (1:200–217, 249–54), *Enūma Eliš* (6:11–20, 31–40), and in *Enki and Ninmaḫ* (ETCSL lines 24–37).

Kusu: The role of Kusu as a purification goddess is attested in numerous first-millennium incantations in which she is identified as *šanga maḫ ʿen-líl-lá*, “Purification priest of Enlil,” and, in one case, *šanga maḫ dingir-e-ne*, “Purification priest of the gods,” although the tradition is much older. See P. Michalowski, “The Torch and the Censer,” in *The Tablet and the Scroll: Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William W. Hallo* (ed. D. Snell and D. Weisberg M. Cohen; Bethesda: CDL, 1993), 152–62, esp. pp. 158–59.

On Ningirim, see G. Cunningham, *Deliver Me from Evil: Mesopotamian Incantations 2500–1500 BC* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1997) 16–17; and Michalowski, “The Torch and the Censer,” 159.

69. See Tablet 1/2, Section A, in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 91–95 and 95 n. 43; and *urigallu* in AHW 3.1429–30.

The priest delineated the ritual space with a magical circle of flour and performed various ritual acts on the neighboring riverbank, after which he drew water for seven sacred basins (*eggubê*).⁷⁰ He then returned to the city, at which point he was instructed to enter Kusu's temple (*bīt Kusu*). There he filled⁷¹ what seems to have been a separate basin, designated as "the holy-water basin of mouth-washing" (*eggubê ša mīs pī*), with tamarisk, various flora, and an assortment of precious metal, gems, oils, wood, salt, syrup, and ghee.⁷²

The priest then tied colored wool around the neck of the basin⁷³ and covered its opening with a small bowl while reciting the appropriate incantation. He then purified the holy-water basin with censer and torch,⁷⁴ and cleansed the surrounding area by sweeping the ground and sprinkling pure water. Additional ritual equipment was set up and the priest recited several incantations, one of which concerned the holy-water vessel of the purification deities, Kusu and Ningirim.⁷⁵ Offerings were then arranged before the holy-water vessel, and sacrifices and libations were made. The priest recited the incantation, "Pure water which runs in the Tigris," as he prostrated himself before the holy-water vessel. He then returned to the storehouse for additional supplies and examined the *paṭiru*-altar for future use.

3.2.4.1.2. Temple Workshop

3.2.4.1.2.a. Nineveh Version (lines 55–64)

The next section focuses on the ritual activity carried out in the temple workshop or "the house of the craftsmen" (*bīt mārē ummāni* or *bīt mummi*).⁷⁶ The priest first cleansed and purified the workshop area and

70. Presumably, he placed the water he drew from the river into basins that he then deposited in the chapel of Kusu, as was done in the Babylon version, but this is not specified.

71. The verb is missing. Walker and Dick suggest ŠUB/*nadû* (*The Induction*, 54 n. 51).

72. Later this basin is referred to as the "holy-water vessel of Kusu and Ningirim." See *ibid.*, 56 line 46.

73. *Ibid.*, 55 line 38. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 213, understands *kišassu*, "its neck," as the neck of the statue.

74. Torch, censer, and holy-water basin are commonly used in purification rituals. See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 55 n. 56.

75. On Kusu and Ningirim, see n. 68 above.

76. This building or series of buildings was likely identified with the *Apsû*, the subterranean home of Ea, referred to in the Sumerian text "Enki and the World Order" as "your special workshop, the place where gods are born, ungraspable as heaven" (lines 194–96 in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 52 n. 34). It is identified similarly in the *mīs pī* as the place "where the god was created" (*ašar ilu ibbanû* in *ibid.*, 57 line 55). A. Heidel described the *bīt mummi* as "the place where the statues and ornaments of the gods and the equipment and ornamental work of their temples were made or restored; the place where the newly made images of the gods were magically animated and where the damaged images were reanimated by restoring them and by performing the prescribed rituals. . . . We may therefore call the *bīt mummi* the workshop of the temples; the expression is synonymous with the *bīt mārē mummi*, 'the house of the craftsmen.' . . . It was most likely a workshop and a technical training school" ("The Meaning of Mummu in Akkadian Literature," *JNES* 7 [1948] 103). It was intimately connected with Ea, the father of the image undergoing

made offerings to Ea, Asalluḫi, and the newly created god (*ilu*). It is noteworthy that even at this early stage of the ritual, prior to the first mouth-washing, the image was addressed as *ilu* and received its first offering.⁷⁷ The priest then performed the first mouth-washing and the first mouth-opening on the *ilu*, after which he purified it with censer, torch, and holy water. He recited the incantation “[In heaven] by your own power you emerge,” and then addressed the image itself for the first time: “From today you go before your father, Ea. Let your heart be pleased, let your mind be happy. May Ea, your father, be full of joy with you.”⁷⁸ Although this was only the first of multiple mouth-washings (and mouth-openings), the image was already coming to life in the temple workshop, because it was both cleansed through mouth-washing and animated by the opening of its mouth.⁷⁹ The latter was indicated both by the priest’s address, which presumed that the image’s ears, heart, mind, and limbs were then func-

consecration, “who was not only present in the *bīt mummi* but who was himself ‘*mummu*, the creator of all things, ‘*mummu*, the creator of ordinances and ceremonies,’ ‘the lord of wisdom, the creator of creation, the fashioner of all things,’ ‘the god of oracles and incantations, the patron of the craftsmen, and the inventor of writing’” (Heidel, “The Meaning of Mummu,” 104).

77. Note the comments of Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth,” 52 and n. 32, “At this stage of the ritual, the statue was already referred to as ‘god’ and not only as ‘statue.’ This is an unmistakable sign that even before its participation in the first mouth-washing ritual the image was not considered to be a mere product of human craftsmanship, but a divine being in its own right,” contra Dietrich (“Der Werkstoff wird Gott,” 124) and M. Dietrich and O. Loretz and who considered the divine image as dead matter until the mouth-washing and mouth-opening rituals were completed (“*Jahwe und seine Aschera*”: *Anthropomorphes Kultbild in Mesopotamien, Ugarit und Israel: Das biblische Bilderverbot*. Ugaritische-Biblische Literatur, 9 [Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1992], 36). See also Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 7 n. 10. Note, however, that even after several mouth-washings and mouth-openings have been performed, the divine image is not addressed exclusively as *ilu*. In Incantation Tablet 1/2 (Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 116, 120 lines 32, 40), Incantation Tablet 3 (ibid., 135, 149 line 49ab; 139–43, 150, 151 lines 55ab–65ab, 69 ab, 70ab, 73ab, 82ab, 87/8) and Incantation Tablet 4 (ibid., 163 lines 22, 23ab) it is referred to repeatedly as *alam/šalmu*. Thus, while during the *mis pi* the image may have undergone a gradual process of transformation, it was not purely linear. This is further suggested in Incantation Tablet 3 line 49ab, where *ilu* is in parallel to *šalmu*: “when the god was fashioned, the pure statue completed” (*i-nu DINGIR ib-ba-nu- ú šal-mu el-lu uš-tak-li-lu* in ibid., 135–36, 149), suggesting that the divine image was both an *ilu* and a *šalmu* simultaneously. Apparently, there was not always a clear and distinct boundary between the two.

78. Ibid., 57 lines 59a, 61–63.

79. Although the text does not state explicitly that the transformation from statue to divine being was a gradual process, the fact that the priest performed 13 mouth-washings and mouth-openings suggests that this was the case. If one mouth-washing and mouth-opening would have been sufficient, then why perform 12 additional mouth-washings and mouth-openings? Furthermore, note the exclamation in Incantation Tablet 4 in which the image is addressed directly, “He (Ea) has brought your divinity to completion!” (*i-lu-ut-ka ú-šak-lil* in ibid., 162–63, 184 line 18ab), suggesting that all 13 mouth washings and openings were necessary.

tioning, and by the offerings, which suggest that the divine statue was then capable of eating.⁸⁰

Portions of incantation STT 199 were likely recited as part of the ritual procedure carried out in the workshop.⁸¹ There are several indications of this. First, the purity of the wood from which the statue was made is repeatedly extolled: “as you come out from the pure (*kù*) forest, wood of the pure forest, as you come out from the pure mountain, [wood] of the pure mountain, as you come out from the pure orchard, wood of the pure orchard . . . as you come from the pure forest of *taskarinnu* trees, wood of the pure forest of *taskarinnu* trees.”⁸² The text also enumerates several deities who were involved in the manufacture of the statue, including Ninildu, who “touches your (the statue’s) limbs”⁸³ Ninkurra, who colors the image’s eyes; and Kusibanda, who “works the statue” (*alam šu gar-ra*).⁸⁴

3.2.4.1.2.b. Babylon Version (lines 1–4)

The Babylon version begins in the temple workshop rather than with the ritual preparations described in the Nineveh texts. The water basins are prepared in the garden, when the equipment is needed, rather than prior to the ritual.

Overall, the ritual actions are quite similar in the two versions. In the Babylon text, however, the priest places red and white cloths, perhaps garments, next to the statue, and the image’s mouth is washed, but it is not explicitly opened as it was in the Nineveh version. In fact, there is no overt reference to the opening of the mouth in the primary ritual text from Babylon,⁸⁵ although the mouth is washed 14 times. The phrase *pīt pī* does appear, however, in Incantation Tablet 3 which states, “this statue cannot smell incense without the ‘Opening of the Mouth’ (*pīt pī*) ceremony. It

80. Berlejung comments, “The first mouth-washing and mouth-opening of the god was accompanied by purification rites with censer, torch and holy water basin, and it heralded the transfer of the perceptual functions to the image. It was then possible, for the first time, to address it directly and to ask it to go before its father Ea with a happy heart. It was believed that at this stage of the ritual, the image’s ears and heart would be functioning perfectly” (“Washing the Mouth,” 52). See also Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 214–15.

81. This incantation is transliterated and translated in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 114–22.

82. Ibid., 115, 120 lines 14–16, 26.

83. That is, who chops, chisels, and saws the wood used to form the statue’s core. Walker and Dick comment, “Ninildu, the god of wood-working, is here making the basic statue from the timber prior to its adornment by the other deities” (*The Induction*, 116 n. 138).

84. Ibid., 116, 120 lines 33–39.

85. I am distinguishing here, following Walker and Dick, between the “ritual tablets” (for the Nineveh version, this includes the tablets listed in the table in ibid., 35–36 and for the Babylon version it consists of tablet BM 45749) and the accompanying incantations, referred to in ibid. as Incantation Tablet 1/2, Incantation Tablet 3, Incantation Tablet 4, Incantation Tablet 5, and Incantation Tablet 6/8.

cannot eat food nor drink water.”⁸⁶ It is mentioned again in reference to Asalluḫi, who opens the image’s mouth with cedar, cypress, oil, and syrup.⁸⁷ It is also attested once in Incantation Tablet 4 and again in Incantation Tablet 6/8. The former refers to the opening of the statue’s mouth,⁸⁸ while the latter refers both to the washing and the opening of the mouth of the gods.⁸⁹ Thus, as noted already in §3.2.1, the absence of the phrase *pīt pī* in the primary ritual text does not necessarily imply the absence of the ritual actions it denotes. Rather, *mīs pī* likely was shorthand for *mīs pī pīt pī*,⁹⁰ because it was, necessarily, performed first. The presence of *pīt pī* in the incantations which, from their content, were almost certainly used in the Babylon *mīs pī*, suggests that the opening of the mouth was also a part of the Babylon ceremony.⁹¹

3.2.4.1.3. Procession from the *bīt mummi* to the River

3.2.4.1.3.a. Nineveh Version (lines 65–69)

By torchlight, the craftsmen escort the statue from the workshop to the riverbank, suggesting, as did the priest’s final address to the god in the previous phase (“From today you go [*tallak*] before your father Ea”), that the statue’s legs have been activated. During the procession, the priest recites the incantation, “As you come out, as you come out in greatness (from the forest),”⁹² in which the purity and supernatural quality of the various woods used to make the statue are affirmed.⁹³ The incantation then declares that “the prayer for a statue (*alam*) is heard”⁹⁴ by a team of divine craftsmen. Ninildu “touches your (the statue’s) limbs” (*giš-ge-en-ge-na-zu tag-tag-ga*) and then “touches” (*mi-in-tag*)—presumably, cuts—the wood with his “great axe,” his “fine chisel,” and his “pure saw.”⁹⁵ Kusibanda then

86. Ibid., 140–41, 151 lines 70ab–71ab.

87. Ibid., 146, 152 line 113.

88. Ibid., 184 line 15ab; 188 line 17ab.

89. Ibid., 215–16, 220, 224, 225 lines 33, 49.

90. The conjunction is omitted. See, for example, *ibid.*, 57 line 58 and 60 line 104.

91. See *ibid.*, 17. Hurowitz comments, “A separate mouth-opening ritual is rare, and since opening the mouth was usually performed along with mouth-washing as a complementary act, and is mentioned frequently throughout the incantations of the mouth-washing ritual, it may be assumed to have become subsumed in that ritual. In fact, it is hard to imagine that in the case of divine statues the rituals existed independently, as if one could be performed without the other” (“The Solar Calendar,” 27:147).

92. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 119–21 lines 13–14.

93. Even the nourishment for the tree from which the statue’s core was cut had a divine source. It was watered by Enki with holy water from the Apsû. See *ibid.*, 120 line 31.

94. Ibid., 116, 120 line 32.

95. Ibid., 116, 120 lines 34–35. Walker and Dick comment, “Ninildu, the god of wood-working, is here making the basic statue from the timber prior to its adornment by the other deities. Sumerian *tag* or *tag-tag* corresponds to Akkadian *maḥāṣu*, *dummuqu*, and *zu’unu* in addition to the commoner *lapātur*, so *tag-tag-ga* here may include some idea of artistic fashioning” (*ibid.*, 116 n. 138).

“works” the statue (*alam šu gar-ra x*),⁹⁶ and Ninkurra colors its eyes (*igi-zu gîm-gûn-na x*).⁹⁷

3.2.4.1.3.b. Babylon Version (lines 5–6)

The Babylon text reflects no significant variations in these two lines, with one noticeable exception: the “countryside” (*šēru*) is not mentioned. Its absence can, perhaps, be explained if we assume that the priests in Babylon drew the holy water from the section of the Euphrates which ran through the city center on the western edge of the temple compound, within the city walls. Despite the fact that the Tigris ran through the city of Nineveh, the Nineveh version specifies that the ritual was performed outside the city limits⁹⁸ in the *šēru*, on the bank of the Tigris, where the gateway to the *Apsû*—the abode of Ea—was located. At Babylon, the entire ritual was, apparently, confined to the Temple of Ea and the area surrounding it. Ekarzaginna was part of the temple compound at Esagila, but it was a separate, enclosed building located on the quay.⁹⁹ The temple itself has not been found, but it is mentioned in several inscriptions,¹⁰⁰ which, when combined with the results of the excavations of Babylon’s temple complex, locate the temple on the bank of the Euphrates about 100m west of Esagil within the temple compound.¹⁰¹

We can conclude, therefore, that the *šēru* was not an indispensable component of the mouth-washing and mouth-opening ritual. The crucial elements for washing and opening the statue’s mouth were, apparently, proximity to Ea, Lord of the *Apsû* and the father of the newly crafted image, and unmediated access to holy water, with its purifying effect and cleansing power.

3.2.4.1.4. At the Riverbank

3.2.4.1.4.a. Nineveh Version (lines 70–94)

The ritual resumes in an orchard along the riverbank in the countryside (*šēru*). Images of the attendant gods Ea and Asalluḫi were seated and fed, as was the new statue. The craftsmen then ceremoniously returned their tools to their patron Ea, the divine craftsman and the father of the newly created god, by placing them in the thigh of a ram and casting the thigh into the river.¹⁰² The priest then recited the incantation, “He who comes, his mouth

96. Ibid., 116, 120 line 39.

97. Ibid., 116, 120 lines 33–39. The god of metal working, Ninzadim, is also involved, but the portion of the text describing his work is lost. See line 37.

98. Ibid., 52 lines 1–4 and n. 36.

99. Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth,” 50–51.

100. George, *Babylonian Topographical Texts*, 302–4, and see §3.2.2. See also Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 21–27.

101. See George, *Babylonian Topographical Texts*, 303; Robert Koldewey, *Das wieder er-stehende Babylon* (Munich: Beck, 1990) Abb. 1; and Eckhard Unger, *Babylon: Die heilige Stadt nach der Beschreibung der Babylonier* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1970) Tafel 57, top plan.

102. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 58 n. 78.

is washed . . . with his brothers let him be counted.”¹⁰³ The offerings to Ea are then dismantled.

3.2.4.1.4.b. *Babylon Version (lines 6–12)*

The Babylon version instructs the priest to take the image to the river bank, as in the Nineveh version, but it does not mention an orchard at this point. The statue was moved into the orchard in the following phase. A second difference from the Nineveh version is that the image is positioned facing sunset, perhaps symbolizing the image’s former existence in the workshop,¹⁰⁴ but it is also possible that the image is simply awaiting the moment of its birth when it will be turned toward the rising sun the following morning.¹⁰⁵

3.2.4.1.5. *Procession from the River into the Garden*

In both versions (Nineveh line 95 and Babylon line 12), the priest is instructed to move the divine statue, either to the interior of the garden¹⁰⁶ (Nineveh version) or into the garden for the first time (Babylon version).

3.2.4.1.6. *In the Garden*

3.2.4.1.6.a. *Nineveh Version (lines 95–108)*

At Nineveh, the image was already in the garden,¹⁰⁷ and hence it is presumably being moved from the edge of the garden, along the riverbank, either closer to the garden’s center or to another locale within the garden. It is seated on a reed mat amid the reed huts and standards, and positioned facing the east, the direction of the rising sun, signifying its impending animation and birth.¹⁰⁸ Its accoutrements and the craftsmen’s equipment are placed alongside the image. The priest prepares offerings for nine at-

103. Ibid., 59 lines 88–93. See also p. 65 lines 164–72.

104. Berlejung (“Washing the Mouth,” 56) states that the westward orientation of the statue “indicates that this part of the ritual refers to the ‘old existence’ of the image in relation to its birth in the workshop, awaiting its rebirth in the direction of the east”; and similarly in idem, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 220.

105. An eastward orientation, facing sunrise, signified rebirth. See S. Maul *Zukunftsbewältigung: Einer Untersuchung altorientalischen Denkens anhand der babylonisch-assyrischen Löserituale (Namburbi)*. (Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern, 1994) 125; and J. Polonsky, *The Rise of the Sun God and the Determination of Destiny in Ancient Mesopotamia* (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2002).

106. The orchard at Nineveh is described in the ritual text as *ša kišad nāri*, “on the riverbank,” and thus it was located in the *šēru*. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 58 line 70.

107. See ibid., 58 line 70.

108. Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth,” 56 n. 49; and idem, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 221. See references listed in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 59 n. 82. See also W. Farber, “Magic at the Cradle: Babylonian and Assyrian Lullabies,” *Anthropos* 85 (1990) 139–48, esp. pp. 140 and 142–43, where newborns are referred to in two Old Babylonian lullabies as those who have emerged from the “house of darkness” (the womb) and now have seen the light of the sun. This same idea appears in several other Babylonian baby incantations. See W. Farber, *Schlaf, Kindchen, Schlaf: Mesopotamische Baby-Beschwörungen und -Rituale* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1989) 160.

tendant deities and nine astral deities, makes sacrifices and libations, and then performs mouth-washing and mouth-opening rituals. The offering arrangements are dismantled and nine new censers are set up for the gods of the night, a group of nine craft, birth, and purification deities, who are invoked by name and offered a ram sacrifice. The third mouth-washing and mouth-opening is then performed. This concludes the first day of the *mīs pī pīt* in the Nineveh version of the ritual.

3.2.4.1.6.b. Babylon Version (lines 12–36)

The statue is moved from the riverbank into the temple gardens. At Babylon, this garden, the Garden of the Apsû, was enclosed by a wall with at least three gates, one of which, known as *Ká-zaḡ-kiri* (Gate at the Garden's Edge), opened onto the bank of the Euphrates that ran along the western edge of the temple compound.¹⁰⁹ The second gate is referred to as *Ká-Íd* (Gate of the River), which opens onto the Garden of the Apsû, and the third is known as *Ká-kiri-Abzu* (Gate of the Garden of the Apsû), described further as “the gate at which the mouths of the gods are opened.”¹¹⁰ This garden is mentioned twice in historical inscriptions from the 7th century B.C.E. as a place where mouth-washing and mouth-opening rituals were performed.¹¹¹

During this stage, the holy water basins, prepared prior to the *mīs pī pīt* proper in the Nineveh version, are arranged. As in the Nineveh version, the priest is instructed to fill seven basins with holy water and a mixture of flora, precious stones, and other ingredients. However, in the Babylon version, water from the basins is then poured into a tamarisk trough (*buginnu*) and combined with precious stones, gold and silver, flora, and oil. The seven basins, presumably now empty, are then placed on or near the brick of the exalted mother-goddess, Dingirmaḥ. This action has no parallel in the Nineveh texts; its various interpretations and its possible significance will be discussed below in §§3.3.1–3.3.4.

What follows is similar to the events in the Nineveh account, including offerings made to a host of birth and craft deities, with the notable exception that in the Babylon version nine mouth-washings,¹¹² rather than three as in the Nineveh version, are performed during this first day in the orchard.

This concludes the first phase of the Babylon version of the *mīs pī pīt*. It is worth noting for later discussion that in both the Babylon and the

109. Text BM 35046 rev. 26–28 in George, *Babylonian Topographical Texts*, 94, 95 line 28.

110. Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth,” 51 and n. 25; George, *Babylonian Topographical Texts*, 303.

111. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 27 and n. 93. The texts are published in R. Borger, *Die Inschriften Asarhaddons, Königs von Assyrien* (AfOB 9; Graz, 1956) §53, AsBbA Rs.2–38; and more recently in Porter, *Images, Power and Politics*, 145.

112. The 3rd through the 11th mouth-washing.

Nineveh versions the orchard, whether in the *šēru*, as in Nineveh, or within the city walls, as in Babylon, was a ritually significant site where most of the animating rites were enacted. Its importance is indicated already in phase one by the extensive preparations undertaken there, including the preparation of the holy-water basin that was used exclusively for the rituals performed in the garden.¹¹³ It is also significant that in both versions the image is already considered a living being at some level, or at least it is in the process of coming to life, even in the earliest stages of the *mīs pī pīt pī*. Not only is the statue referred to as a “god” (*ilu*), but it has gained mobility and its mouth, ears, heart, and mind are now operative. In the following phase, which also takes place in the sacred garden, the divine statue will be animated fully.

3.2.4.2. Day Two

3.2.4.2.1 In the Garden

3.2.4.2.1.a. Nineveh Version (lines 109–204)

On the following morning, the priest sets up thrones for Ea, Šamaš, and Asalluḫi, on which he places a clean, red cloth, perhaps a garment, for each god.¹¹⁴ He then makes offerings of food, including a splendid array of fruit from the garden itself,¹¹⁵ drink, and various types of wool to each.¹¹⁶ After an incantation addressed to the holy trio of Ea, Šamaš, and Asalluḫi, the priest announces that he has purified and prepared the area for them. He then makes the following request:

- 33 Because the completion of the rites of the great gods
 34 (and) the direction of the plan of the purification rite rest with you
 35 on this day be present: for this statue (a la m) which stands before you
 36 ceremoniously grant him the destiny *that his mouth may eat* (*pī-ī-šú ana ma-ka-le-e*),
 37 *that his ears might hear* (*ú-zu-un-šú ana niš-mé-e*).¹¹⁷

113. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 214.

114. Walker and Dick translate *šubata ḫuššī* in NR line 110 as “red cloth,” commenting, “Apparently statues, standards or symbols of the three gods of white magic would have been seated on thrones covered with a red cloth” (*The Induction*, 61 n. 92). However, in the incantation “Ea, Šamaš, and Asalluḫi” recited shortly after these thrones were set up, the priest exclaims, “I have set up pure thrones for your sitting; I have dedicated clean red garments (TUG₁ *ḫušše ebbutu*) for you,” where “red garments” (TUG₁ *ḫušše*) is equivalent to the Akkadian *šubata ḫuššī* in NR line 110. Thus *šubata tatarraṣ* in NR line 110 may refer to some type of divine garment.

115. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 62 line 118.

116. Lines 122–28 refer to craft deities and human craftsmen, but their preservation is so poor that the events cannot be reconstructed beyond the command in line 128 to purify.

117. *Ibid.*, 134, 149 lines 33–37, my emphasis.

The priest offers a censer of juniper for seven craft and purification deities and presents them with food and drink. He then performs mouth-washing and mouth-opening rituals on the divine statue and purifies it with censer, torch, and holy water, after which he retires. When the text resumes, it instructs the priest to feed the god with the meat of a ram and to recite the incantation, "On the day when the god was created (dím)." ¹¹⁸ This incantation, one of the *šu-illa* prayers for opening the mouth of a god, represents the climax of the ritual. ¹¹⁹ It emphasizes the glorious appearance of the divine, describing the image as follows:

- 51ab . . . bearing an awe-inspiring halo, he is adorned with lordliness;
lordly, he is all pride (*šá-lum-ma-tam na-ši e-tel-lu-ta a-sim e-til ir-ta ga-mir*);
- 52ab surrounded with splendor, endowed with an awesome appearance,
(*me-lam-me šu-ta-as-ḥur bu-un-na-an-né-e ra-šub-ba-tam ra-mi*)
- 53ab it ¹²⁰ appeared magnificently, the statue shone brilliant; ¹²¹
(*šar-ḫi-iš it-ta-na-an-biṭ šal-mu el-lu šu-pu*)

The incantation further highlights various physical features of the image and names the divine craftsmen responsible for its formation, as well as the materials they used, including gold, silver, and precious stones. ¹²² This is followed by a two-line summary of the purpose of the *pīt pī*: "This statue cannot smell incense without the Opening of the Mouth Ceremony; it cannot eat food nor drink water." ¹²³

The work of the human craftsmen is then ritually denied by symbolically cutting off their hands. This is done to emphasize the statue's divine parentage as a product of the craft gods. ¹²⁴ The priest whispers into the statue's left ear, "Among your brother gods you are counted" ([*i*]t-ti DINGIR.MEŠ ŠEŠ.MEŠ-ka [*ta-a*]t-tam-nu) ¹²⁵ and into its right ear he says, "From this day let your fate be counted as divinity (*ul-tu u₄-me an-ni-i š[i-ma-ti-ka] a-na DINGIR-ti [lim-ma-nu]-[ma]*); among your brother gods may you be counted ([*i*]t-ti DINGIR.MEŠ ŠEŠ.MEŠ-ka [*ta-a*]t-tam-nu); draw near to the king who knows your voice ([*ana*] LUGAL *mu-de pi-ka [qu-r]u-ub*),

118. Ibid., 64 line 160.

119. Ibid., 64 n. 111. This incantation is apparently the one recorded in Tablet 3 entitled, "when the god was fashioned (dím), the pure statue completed" in *ibid.*, 135–36 line 49ab; 149 line 49ab.

120. Note that the form is the Ntn of *nabātu*, which captures the iterative nature of the image's magnificent appearance.

121. Ibid., 136–38, 150 lines 51ab–53ab. Perhaps this is better rendered in English as "shone brilliantly."

122. Several of these stone types, specifically *muššaru*, *pappardillû*, *pappardillû*, and *dušu* stones, were also used to purify the image earlier in the ritual.

123. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 140–41, 151 lines 70ab–71ab.

124. Ibid., 151.

125. Ibid., 147 line 10.

approach your temple (*'a'-na 'É'-ka [?q]u-ru-ub*) . . . to the land where you were created be reconciled" (*[a]-'na' KUR tab-nu-ú [n]ap-ši-ir*).¹²⁶ Clearly, both of the divine statue's ears are considered to be functioning, and he hears the priest's imperative to join the divine company. This is followed by a ceremony in which the human craftsmen deny having any involvement in the image-making process, attributing the creation of the image to various craft gods:

(I swear) I did not make (*ēpu[šu]*) (the statue) [. . .],
 Ninagal, who is Ea [. . .],
 I did not make (*ēpuš*) (the statue); (I swear) I did not [make (it)],
 Ninildu, who is Ea the god of the carpenter [made it . . .]
 I did not make (*ēpuš*) (the statue), (I swear) I did not make (it) (*lā ēpušuma*),
 [. . .]
 Kusibanda, who is Ea the god of the goldsmith, [made it . . .]
 Ninkurra, who is Ea the god of [. . .]
 Ninzadim, who is Ea the god [of . . . made it].¹²⁷

This stage concludes with additional offerings and the recitation of several incantations. In the incantation "As you grew up," lines 10ab–11ab implore the image to protect the temple and to be established there in the sanctuary.¹²⁸ This is followed by a list of four priests who have collectively opened the statue's mouth seven times and cleansed it with holy water. The incantation closes with a tribute to Ea, who has "brought your divinity to completion! He has prepared your mouth for eating (*pi-i-ka ana ma-ka-li iš-kun*)!"¹²⁹

Two final incantations, "Exalted garment, *lamaḥušu*-garment of white linen"¹³⁰ and "Exalted crown, crown [endowed with] great awe (*aga-maḥ aga ní-gal-a-ri-[a]*),"¹³¹ were recited as the image was adorned with the appropriate garments and regalia. The latter describes the crown as "majestic crown, crown endowed with awesome splendor (*a-gu-u š[i-ru a-gu-u šá nam-ri-ir-ri ra-mu-ú]*),"¹³² It "shines like the day" and its radiance (*melammu*) extends over the lands and "touches the heavens."¹³³ Ea determined its destiny, Anu decorated it, and Kusu purified it and made it shine. It was,

126. Ibid., 152–53 lines 6–7.

127. Ibid., 66 lines 179–86.

128. The incipit is found in *ibid.*, 80 line 53; the incantation itself is in *ibid.*, 184 lines 1–19.

129. Ibid., 162–63, 184 lines 18ab–19ab.

130. Ibid., 66 line 192. Only the incipit has been preserved.

131. Only the incipit is preserved in *ibid.*, 183, 188 line 22ab, 67 line 193.

132. Ibid., 193, 203 line 1ab.

133. Ibid., 204 line 5ab; 203 line 3ab.

"[t]he pure crown perfected as an emblem of divinity (*aga-kù-ga me-⁷te⁷ nam-dingir-ra túm-ma*)!"¹³⁴

A third incantation was uttered for the throne. A team of craftsmen gods plated it with red gold and adorned it with precious stones.¹³⁵ It was purified and firmly established on a pedestal in the temple. After a final incantation to Šamaš, the priest dismantled the offerings. The rest of the Nineveh version is lost.

3.2.4.2.1.b. *Babylon Version (lines 37–59)*

The Babylon version is similar to its Assyrian counterpart, including an imperative to "provide in splendid abundance the fruit of the orchard" for the attendant deities.¹³⁶ The Babylon version also contains a denial of human participation in the creation of the image. As in the Nineveh version, the craftsmen's hands are bound with a scarf and symbolically cut off with a knife while they recite, "I did not make him (the statue), Ninagal (who is) Ea (god) of the smith made him."¹³⁷ Unique to the Babylon version, however, is the specific instruction to open the image's eye (*in ili šuāti tepette*).¹³⁸ Although the text does not explain or elaborate on why this was done, it was, presumably, intended to animate the statue's eyes, just as the other sensory organs and limbs had been activated. Despite the lack of an explicit reference to this act in the Nineveh version, the repeated commands to set the image's eyes toward the rising sun suggest that the opening of the eye(s) may also have been a feature of the *pīt pī* at Nineveh.¹³⁹ The Babylon version concludes with similar incantations for the divine statue's clothing, crown, and throne.

3.2.4.2.2. *Procession from the Orchard to the Gate of the Temple (Babylon Version line 59) 140*

The image is then escorted from the garden to the temple gate.¹⁴¹

3.2.4.2.3. *At the Temple Gate (Babylon Version line 60)*

An offering is made at the temple door.

134. Ibid., 195, 204 line 14ab.

135. Ibid., 195–98, 204–5 lines 8ab–41.

136. Ibid., 76 and 80 line 40.

137. Ibid., 76 and 80 line 52.

138. Ibid., 76 and 90 line 53. See also Berlejung, "Washing the Mouth," 66–67 and n. 82.

139. Ibid., 59 line 97 and n. 82.

140. This part of the Nineveh version, corresponding to lines 59–70 in the Babylon version, is lost. The following summary, therefore, is based solely on the Babylon version.

141. The incantations recited at this juncture, "May the foot which bestrides the ground" and "As he walked through the street," are incantations of purity directed apparently at the priest rather than the statue. See Incantation Tablet 6/8 in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 211–25 lines 1–66.

3.2.4.2.4. *Procession from the Temple Gate to the Holy of Holies*
(Babylon Version lines 60–61)

The statue is led into his temple, seated on his throne while the priest recites the incantation, “My lord, to your heart’s content.”¹⁴² This is, presumably, the incantation preserved in Tablet 4,¹⁴³ which encourages the divine statue to live with joy and peace in its temple, its new “abode of rest” (*šu-bat né-elḫ-ta*), and which asks Anu and Enlil to provide it with an abundant and eternal supply of food.¹⁴⁴

3.2.4.2.5. *In the Holy of Holies* (Babylon Version lines 61–65)

The god is enthroned in his cella and offered a sumptuous meal as the priest recites the appropriate incantations, “The celestial evening meal”¹⁴⁵ and “Fit for the august throne-dais.”¹⁴⁶ The priest makes offerings to Ea and Asalluḫi, performs a 14th and final mouth-washing, and purifies the image with water. He then recites an incantation to Asalluḫi and adorns the image with additional “trappings of divinity” (*tamannuma ilūti*).¹⁴⁷

3.2.4.2.6. *To the Quay of the Apsû* (Babylon Version lines 65–70)

The closing lines instruct the priest to perform a cleansing ritual as he walks toward the gate of the *Apsû* and to warn that the ritual must be kept in strict confidence among the initiates.¹⁴⁸

**3.2.5. Comparison of the Nineveh Version and the
Babylon Version of the mīs pī pīt pī**

Nineveh Version	Babylon Version
Day One Preparations in the City, Countryside, Garden and the Temple	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• marker set up for later placement of statue toward sunrise• reed huts for deities constructed at riverbank• water drawn for 7 basins set up on riverbank	

142. The Sumerian term for “lord” is *lugal*, “lord, master, owner, king” (*Pennsylvania Sumerian Dictionary* Online: <http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/epsd/index.html>). Walker and Dick translate *lugal* as “king” here and in Incantation Tablet 4, where it also refers to the statue (*The Induction*, 177, 187 line 31a). In the former no Akkadian equivalent is given, but the principle Akkadian exemplars for Incantation Tablet 4 render *lugal* as Akkadian *bēlum*, “lord, master,” rather than *šarru*, “king” (*ibid.*, 177 line 31a). Thus, I have translated *lugal* here as “lord.” See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 76–77, 81 lines 60–61.

143. *Ibid.*, 163–71, 184–85 lines 22–64ab; 173–75, 186 lines 1ab–15ab; 177–79, 187 lines 31ab–39ab.

144. *Ibid.*, 168–70, 185 lines 52ab–62ab; and 178, 187 lines 36ab–37ab.

145. Little of this incantation is preserved. See *ibid.*, 73, 81 line 61; 179, 187 line 41ab.

146. *Ibid.*, 73, 81 line 61; 180–81 line 12ab; 188 line 12ab.

147. *Ibid.*, 77, 81 line 64.

148. *Ibid.*, 77, 82 lines 66–70.

Nineveh Version	Babylon Version
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fills holy-water basin of mouth-washing in temple of Kusu 	
Temple Workshop	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cleansed and purified workshop offerings made image addressed as <i>ilu</i>, receives first offering mouth-washing and mouth-opening image purified incantation: "In heaven by your own power you emerge" image addressed: "From today you go before Ea, your father" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two holy water vessels set up offerings made mouth-washing incantation: "Born in heaven by your own power" image addressed: "From today you go before Ea, your father"
Procession from <i>bīt mummi</i> to River	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> craftsmen escort statue from <i>bīt mummi</i> to riverbank in the <i>šēru</i> priest proclaims purity and supernatural quality of wood craft deities form the image 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> craftsmen escort statue from <i>bīt mummi</i> to riverbank, no <i>šēru</i> priest proclaims purity and supernatural quality of wood craft deities form the image
At the Riverbank	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ea and Asalluḫi and new image seated in orchard and fed craftsmen return tools to Ea via river mouth-washing, incantation: He who comes, his mouth is washed . . . with his brothers let him be counted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ea and Asalluḫi and new image seated in orchard and fed, new image faces sunset craftsmen return tools to Ea via river mouth-washing, incantation: He who comes, his mouth is washed . . .^a
Procession from River to Garden	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> image escorted into garden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> image escorted into garden
In the Garden	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> image seated on mat amid reed huts and standards eyes set toward sunrise craftsmen's equipment laid down offerings made mouth-washing and mouth-opening performed additional offerings made to various deities mouth-washing and mouth-opening performed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> image seated on mat amidst reed huts and standards eyes set toward sunrise offerings made priest draws water for 7 holy-water basins and puts them in Kusu temple priest prepares holy-water basin of mouth-washing priest fills tamarisk trough and places it on brick of Dingir-maḫ mouth-washing performed more offerings made to various deities

a. The phrase "with his brothers let him be counted" is not included in the Babylon Version, but it may have been part of the incantation.

Nineveh Version	Babylon Version
Day Two In the Garden	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• set up 3 thrones, 3 tables for Ea, Shamash, and Asalluḫi• make offerings• craftsmen deities mentioned• priest recites incantations: “Born in heaven by his own power”• and incantations to Shamash, Ea, and Asalluḫi• offerings made to craft deities• priest performs mouth-washing and mouth-opening• offerings presented• incantation: “On the day when the god was created”• priest performs mouth-washing and mouth-opening• priest whispers into god’s ears, god exhorted to approach its temple• human craftsmen deny their contribution• series of incantations recited, including “Statue born in a pure place” and “Statue born in heaven”• offerings dismantled	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• set up 3 thrones, 3 tables for Ea, Shamash, and Asalluḫi• make offerings• priest recites incantations: “Born in heaven by his own power”• and incantations to Shamash, Ea, and Asalluḫi• priest performs mouth-washing• incantation: “On the day when the god was created”• priest performs mouth-washing• human craftsmen deny their contribution• priest opens the god’s eye• series of incantations recited, including “Statue born in a pure place” and “Statue born in heaven”• offerings dismantled
Rest of Nineveh Version Lost	Procession from Orchard to Temple Gate
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• statue escorted to its temple
	At the Temple Gate
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• priest makes offering
	Procession from Temple Gate to Holy of Holies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• statue seated and fed• offerings made to Ea and Asalluḫi• priest performs mouth-washing• statue purified• additional garments or insignia given
	To the Quay
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• purification rituals performed

3.3. A Reanalysis of the Birthing Imagery in the *mīs pī pīt pī*

3.3.1. Introduction

One of the significant differences between the Nineveh and Babylon versions of the *mīs pī pīt pī*, noted above under Day 1 (Babylon version, lines 12–36), occurs in the garden, amid the reed huts and standards. The Babylon version instructs the priest to fill a tamarisk trough (*buginnu*) with carnelian, lapis-lazuli, silver and gold, juniper, *ḫalšu*-oil, and holy water from seven sacred basins (*egubbê*).¹⁴⁹ The seven sacred basins are then placed on or near the brick of Dingirmaḥ.¹⁵⁰ The text does not mention where the *buginnu* is placed,¹⁵¹ but it is reasonable to assume that it, too, is in the vicinity of the brick. This is followed by a mouth-washing, presumably with the mixture of holy water, flora, and precious materials combined in the “holy-water basin of mouth-washing,” a vessel mentioned earlier,¹⁵² and a series of offerings made to the craft and birth deities and to the stars.¹⁵³ The incantation “Tamarisk, pure wood,” recited with the arrangement of nine offerings, is addressed, presumably, either to the tamarisk that was thrown into the holy-water basin of mouth-washing or to the tamarisk trough mentioned five lines earlier.¹⁵⁴

As noted briefly above, E. Ebeling, followed by Jacobsen, Dietrich, and Boden, interpreted the *buginnu* as a mother’s womb into which Ea’s semen, represented by the holy water, was poured, along with all the necessary ingredients to form the deity.¹⁵⁵ During the night, the divine embryo, surrounded by the various craftsmen deities who aided in its birth, was then conceived in the trough, where it gestated overnight, and it was born on the birthing brick the next day.¹⁵⁶ Boden elaborated on this theory,

149. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 75 and 78 lines 21–22.

150. *Ibid.*, 75 and 78 line 23.

151. Contra Jacobsen, who states that the trough (*buginnu*) was placed on the brick of the birth-goddess (“The Graven Image,” 15–32). The Babylon ritual text specifies that the seven holy water basins (*egubbê*) were placed on or near the brick: *egubbê ina muḫḫi libitti ša Dingirmaḥ tukān*, “You set the holy-water basins on the brick of Dingirmaḥ” (Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 75 and 78 lines 16–23).

152. This vessel is mentioned in line 16.

153. *Ibid.*, 79 lines 25–26.

154. *Ibid.* 79 lines 26–26; 79 line 16; 78 line 21; Boden, *The Mesopotamian Washing*, 104. This may be the incantation preserved in Incantation Tablet 1/2 (*ibid.*, 97 line 63; 100 lines 1–14). If so, then the incantation in its Babylon version may have been directed at the tamarisk *buginnu*.

155. Ebeling, *Tod und Leben*, 100–108; Jacobsen, “The Graven Image,” 25–26. See also T. Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976) 110–16, esp. p. 111 where he discusses the relationship between water and semen in Sumerian thought.

156. Jacobsen, “The Graven Image,” 25–26. Ebeling, Jacobsen, and Boden presumed that the *buginnu* was placed on the brick of Dingirmaḥ, although the text specifies only

interpreting the entire Babylon version of the *mis pî pî pî* ritual as a ritual of transition based on the allegory of human gestation and birth.¹⁵⁷

3.3.2. Peg Boden's Theory

Boden interpreted the *mis pî pî pî* as consisting of three stages: the pre-liminal stage (lines 1–7a), the liminal stage (lines 13–36), and the post-liminal stage (lines 57–65), each of which represented the changing status of the divine image.¹⁵⁸ Between the stages were rites of transition (lines 7b–12 and 37–57) which moved the statue from one stage to the next. The pre-liminal stage, in which the divine statue existed as a material, man-made object in a formless state,¹⁵⁹ included the action in the house of the craftsmen (lines 1–4), the procession from the house of the craftsmen to the river (lines 5–6) and the seating of the image on a reed mat facing the sunset (line 6–7a). It was not yet the deity, she claimed, despite the fact that it was addressed as *ilu*, but only “the shell which is now in a state of readiness to receive the deity. The status of the statue was, therefore, the potential deity, the unrealized divine form.”¹⁶⁰

The first rite of transition, a rite of separation in which the image was removed from its former material existence, consisted of the action at the riverbank (lines 7b–12), the procession from the river to the garden (line 12), and the seating of the god in the garden. The casting of the carpenters’ tools and accompanying objects into the river, that is, the return of these instruments to Ea, severed the statue’s earthly ties and united it with Ea, its creator in the spiritual realm.¹⁶¹ Boden comments:

The statue is a material object—it must be present in the material world—but its design and creation are not of this world. This rite of separation

that the seven *egubbê* were placed on the brick. Whether or not the *buginnu* was placed on the brick, their interpretation of the trough as a womb should not be dismissed too readily.

157. Boden, *The Mesopotamian Washing*, ii, 170–71, 172, 220, 222.

158. *Ibid.*, 175–76.

159. *Ibid.*, 179, 180.

160. *Ibid.*, 180–81. She does not explain why the “potential” deity was addressed already as *ilu*. The term may be used prior to the first mouth-washing in anticipation of the statue’s inevitable divine transformation. Alternatively, this may be an example of “performative language” in which the utterance is thought to generate the desired action. On performative language see D. Pardee and R. Whiting, “Aspects of Epistolary Verbal Usage in Ugaritic and Akkadian,” *BSO(A)S* 50 (1987) 1–31; B. Waltke and M. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990) 488–89; and D. Hillers, “Some Performative Utterances in the Bible,” in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom* (ed. D. P. Wright, D. N. Freedman, and A. Hurvitz; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995) 757–66. The classic works on the subject are J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962); and John R. Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

161. Boden, *The Mesopotamian Washing*, 185.

affirms this by ritually denying any human role in the divinely conceived object and throwing into the river the tools which the craftsmen used to manufacture the statue. These tools are an extension of the craftsmen and have come in direct contact with the statue, thus, when the tools are thrown into the river, the statue is effectively relegated to the "other world" through this gateway of the Abzu. As components of the manufacturing process, the tools are metonymic symbols and when they are sent to the other world, the work they did is effectively negated, the work that the tools carried out is erased from physical reality. Further, the divine origin of the tools and the work they completed may be affirmed by returning them to their spiritual source.¹⁶²

This rite of separation ended when the image was positioned so that it would see the first rays of the sun on the following morning.

The image then moved into Boden's phase two, the liminal stage (lines 13–36), in which the statue existed only in "the other world" or between worlds. During this phase, preparations were made for the transformation and birth of the statue: the priest filled seven vessels with holy water, various flora, salt, precious stones, metals, oil, syrup, and ghee, and placed them in the shrine of the purification goddess, Kusu. This was also the stage where, in the Babylon version, the *buginnu* was introduced. As noted above, Boden, in agreement with Ebeling and Jacobsen, interpreted the trough as a womb into which Ea's semen was combined with all the necessary ingredients to form the divine statue.¹⁶³

Boden interpreted the following nine sets of ritual offerings and incantations to various groups of deities and to the tamarisk trough as the means by which divine attributes were transferred to and conferred on the divine statue.¹⁶⁴ Boden commented, "They . . . form a set of spiritual creators which incrementally construct the whole representation of the god in his earthly form as the statue."¹⁶⁵ The specific contribution of each of the astral deities listed in the second set (lines 27–28) is more difficult to determine. According to E. Reiner, however, their task, as with the first group of deities, was to "irradiate the statue crafted of wood and adorned with precious metals and stones and thus infuse these materials with their power."¹⁶⁶

The liminal stage emphasized the divine statue's divine origins, in terms of both its parentage and the materials used to form the god's physical

162. Ibid., 186.

163. Ibid., 196.

164. Ibid., 197, as listed in STT 200.

165. Ibid., 198.

166. Reiner's conclusion is based on the fact that this portion of the ritual took place at night along the riverbank. She comments ("Astral Magic in Babylonia," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 85 [1995] 140), "The role of the astral deities in the ritual is not specified; nevertheless, that role is clear by the description of the venue, which is at the riverbank, and the time: at night, as indicated by the fact that the procession advances by torchlight."

manifestation—that is, the divine statue itself. During the night, the divine embryo was constituted in the womb as it rested in the vicinity of the brick of Dingirmah.¹⁶⁷ Through a series of ritual acts, including offerings and incantations, divine attributes were transferred from various deities to the materials from which the image was formed, thus charging it with divine power.

This was followed by the second and final rite of transition (lines 37–57), the culminating act, in which the deity was born and manifested itself in the form of the divine statue. This phase included the final mouth-washing, an act which Boden described as “the ultimate act that re-enacts physical birth and brings the statue into the physical world.”¹⁶⁸ Boden claimed that the act of “washing” the divine statue’s mouth was intended to mimic the cleansing of a newborn’s mouth whereby mucus and fluids are removed, allowing the baby to inhale.¹⁶⁹ Similarly, a divine statue’s mouth had to be cleansed before it could breathe. Boden comments, “The Mesopotamian version of this common transition motif (gestation and birth) emphasizes the act which enables the first breath, closely associated with life.”¹⁷⁰

In the third and final stage, which Boden terms the postliminal stage (lines 57–65), the statue was transported to the temple, installed on its dais, and fed an evening meal. The statue had now achieved its status as a god and was ready to rule, protect, and maintain stability and order from within its temple.

In summary, then, Boden understands the *mīs pī pīt pī* as a tripartite ritual of transition guided by the allegory of gestation and birth by which a “god” is created. Its creation is attributed, ultimately, not to human craftsmen but to a group of creator-gods who, through a collaborative effort, form the divine embryo which then gestates overnight while divine powers are transferred to the materials collected in the tamarisk “womb.” On the following day, the god is “born” on the brick of *Bēlet-ilī*¹⁷¹ and its mouth is washed a final time, allowing for its initial life-giving breath. With its sensory organs activated and functioning, the image is clothed, installed in its temple, and fed its first meal. The *ilu* is then ready to assume its divine responsibilities.

3.3.3. Angelika Berlejung’s Response

Berlejung has challenged the notion that the *mīs pī pīt pī* is a ritual guided by the allegory of human birth. She admits that the birthing the-

167. In agreement with Ebeling (*Tod und Leben*, 101) and Jacobsen (“The Graven Image,” 25), Boden understood the *bugimma* “as a type of ‘womb’ which engenders the statue throughout the night of offerings and incantations” (*The Mesopotamian Washing*, 196).

168. *Ibid.*, 210.

169. *Ibid.*, 171.

170. *Ibid.*, 172.

171. The *mīs pī pīt pī* texts do not specify whether or not the statue was actually placed on the birthing brick.

ory may account for the precious metals, wood, and gemstones placed in the trough, because these are all elements from which divine statues are made.¹⁷² However, she claims that it does not explain the oil, butter, syrup, ghee, treacle, or herbs,¹⁷³ nor is there precedent, she argues, for the holy water to represent Ea's sperm.¹⁷⁴ She concludes, therefore, that the contents of the trough and basins have nothing to do with the construction of a statue.¹⁷⁵ Rather, based on the accompanying incantations, she argues that the mixture constituted a "purification elixir" for mouth-washing and mouth-opening, similar to those used for purification in other ritual contexts.¹⁷⁶ In Berlejung's view, this better accounts for the presence of oil, ghee, incense, soapwort, reed, treacle, horned alkali, and other flora in the trough, elements not used in a divine statue's construction.¹⁷⁷ Furthermore, although no cultic commentary for the *mis pi pit pi* specifically has survived, Berlejung explained the ingredients in the trough in light of the cultic commentary CBS 6060 and its duplicates, which contain lists equating deities with particular flora, metals, or gems used in ritual.¹⁷⁸ She suggests, as did E. Reiner, quoted above in §3.3.2, that each ingredient, rather than being used in the statue's composition, represented a particular deity who infused its associated element with purifying and protective power.¹⁷⁹ The inclusion of the various ingredients in the mixture guaranteed the presence and active involvement of their associated deities in the divine image's construction. Furthermore, Berlejung notes that both the trough and the brick of Dingirmah are known from other ritual contexts that have no association with birth.¹⁸⁰ She also argues that the absence of the *buginnu* and the brick from the Nineveh version suggests that these items were not central to the ritual.¹⁸¹ Finally, Berlejung claims that the gods were "born" in the workshop.¹⁸² Had the trough been understood as the womb in which the god was engendered, she argues, it

172. See A. L. Oppenheim, "Golden Garments of the Gods," *JNES* 8 (1949) 172–93.

173. Berlejung, "Washing the Mouth," 58; idem, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 224.

174. Idem, "Washing the Mouth," 58, 59.

175. Ibid., 58; idem, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 224.

176. Idem, "Washing the Mouth," 58–59; idem, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 227.

177. Berlejung may be correct in that these ingredients were used as a purification elixir. However, this does not exclude the possibility that this mixture could have also played a role in the manufacturing of a divine statue.

178. Idem, "Washing the Mouth," 59.

179. Idem, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 224.

180. Idem, "Washing the Mouth," 59. The brick could simply represent the presence of Dingirmah without signifying that the image is to be born on the brick. Livingstone (*Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works of Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1986] 187) comments, "The context suggests that the brick alone is placed and represents the deity, rather than being placed as a platform for the statue or symbol of the deity."

181. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 224.

182. Idem, "Washing the Mouth," 60.

should have been placed in the *bīt mummi*, not in the orchard.¹⁸³ For these reasons, Berlejung concludes, “there is no evidence for the hypothesis that the mouth-washing ritual enacts the procreation and birth of the statue in the different stages of its evolution.”¹⁸⁴ Berlejung also concluded that Boden’s overall analysis, although useful for interpreting components of the ritual, forces the structure of the *mīs pî pīt pî* into an artificial format.¹⁸⁵ Boden’s attempt to prove a linear progression from separation to transformation and finally to affiliation fails, in Berlejung’s view, in light of the fact that these rites were performed *repeatedly* throughout the ritual.¹⁸⁶ Berlejung proposes an alternative tripartite structure consisting of the following stages: preparation (Nineveh lines 1–94, Babylon lines 1–12), the mouth-opening proper (Nineveh lines 95–203, Babylon lines 12–59), and the enthronement of the image in the temple (Babylon lines 59–65).¹⁸⁷ Even though she acknowledges that the *mīs pî pīt pî* and its incantations contain numerous allusions to human birth, she concludes that the ritual is primarily for purification.¹⁸⁸

3.3.4. Critique and Analysis

3.3.4.1. Birthing Imagery in the *mīs pî pīt pî*

Despite Berlejung’s legitimate criticism of certain aspects of Boden’s thesis, particularly the idea that the *mīs pî pīt pî* follows a linear progression from one phase to the next, it is premature to dismiss the notion that the ritual is concerned with the birth of a god. First, it seems that Berlejung has misunderstood what, exactly, the trough (*buginnu*) mentioned in the Babylon version contains. As noted above, she admits that the theory endorsed by Ebeling, Jacobsen, and Boden—namely, that the *buginnu* represents a womb—may account for the precious metals, wood, and gemstones placed in the trough, but it does not explain the oil, butter, syrup, ghee, treacle, or herbs.¹⁸⁹ What Berlejung fails to realize, however, is that the priest is not instructed to put butter, syrup, ghee, treacle, or herbs into the *buginnu*. Rather, those ingredients are placed in “the holy-water basin (*egubbû*) of mouth-washing,” a container distinct from the *buginnu*. The tamarisk *buginnu* is filled with water from the seven holy-water

183. Ibid., 60.

184. Ibid., 58.

185. Ibid., 70; idem, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 256.

186. In Berlejung’s view the purpose of the frequent repetition was to increase the potency of the ritual (*Die Theologie der Bilder*, 256).

187. Idem, “Washing the Mouth,” 68–69.

188. Ibid., 58–60. She proposes (1997: 68–69) an alternative tripartite structure consisting of the following stages: preparation (Nineveh 2.1–94; Babylon 2.1–12), the mouth-opening proper (Nineveh 2.95–203; Babylon 2.12–59), and the enthronement of the image in the temple (Babylon 2.59–65). See *ibid.*, 68–69.

189. Ibid., 58; idem, *Die Theologie der Bilder*, 224.

basins.¹⁹⁰ Carnelian, lapis-lazuli, silver, gold, juniper, and *ḫalšu* oil are then added to the water in the tamarisk *buginnu* (line 22). These same ingredients are known from another *mīs pī* text, "Incantation for [washing] the mouth of anything," in which the mixture is sprinkled on any object in need of purification.¹⁹¹ Thus, although Berlejung was in error about the contents of the *buginnu* used in the Babylon mouth-washing and mouth-opening ceremony, she is likely correct in asserting that the mixture was a purification elixir.¹⁹² Is it possible, however, that the elixir served a dual purpose, functioning both as a purifier and as the raw material from which the statue was formed?¹⁹³ Nearly all of the ingredients in the trough, namely, carnelian, lapis-lazuli, silver, gold, and the tamarisk from which the trough was made, were indeed materials used to construct divine statues. In a first-millennium incantation, tamarisk wood is referred to as the "bones of divinity" (GÌR.PAD.DU DINGIR-ti)¹⁹⁴ and elsewhere as the "bone of the Igigi" (*ešemti Igigi*),¹⁹⁵ perhaps in reference to the statue's wooden core. In the *mīs pī pīt pī* itself, an incantation directed at the tamarisk tree states that "from its trunk gods are made [dím], with its branches gods are cleansed,"¹⁹⁶ demonstrating that tamarisk wood functioned both as the raw material from which divine images were created, as well as an agent by which they were purified. The tamarisk from which the *buginnu* was made, therefore, may have been understood both as a component of the divine statue's formation, perhaps its skeletal system,¹⁹⁷ and as a cleansing and purifying agent, possibly for the womb and the gestating divine embryo.

In the same way, the water may have functioned not only for cleansing and washing. There are several Sumerian texts which associate river water not only with fertility but specifically with Enki's sperm.¹⁹⁸ It is also

190. See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 71, 78 lines 15 and 21. The contents of the holy-water basin of mouth-washing mentioned in *ibid.*, 71, 78 line 17, are not, apparently, poured into the *buginnu*.

191. *Ibid.*, 206.

192. Berlejung, "Washing the Mouth," 58–59, and see n. 58.

193. Berlejung (*ibid.*, 58) herself acknowledges, as we have noted, that Ebeling's womb theory "seems to be a plausible explanation for the precious metals, wood and stones" placed in the trough.

194. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 100 n. 70.

195. *Ubānātu-ú-a* GIŠ.bīnu *ešemtu* ^dig[igī], "my fingers are tamarisk, the bone of the Igigi" from *Maqlû* 6.5 in G. Meier, *Die assyrische Beschwörungssammlung Maqlû* (AfOB 1; Berlin, 1937).

196. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 97, 100 lines 4–5.

197. Tamarisk wood (*bīnu*) was known generally as the material from which gods were made, and more specifically as the substance from which the bones of the Igigi were created. See Walker, *Material for a Reconstruction*, 43; CAD B 240; and Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 79 line 26; 100 line 4 and n. 70.

198. See, for example lines 69–74, 97–107, 117–26, 126L–126Q, and 178–85 in *Enki and Ninḫursaĝa*, in *The Electronic Corpus of Sumerian Literature*. Online: <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.1.1.1#>; and S. N. Kramer, *Enki and Ninḫursag: A Sumerian "Paradise" Myth* (New Haven, CT: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1945).

possible, although unproven, that carnelian (*sāmtu*, feminine) and lapis-lazuli (*uqnu*, masculine) were used to indicate the gender of a child. G. Farber comments, "There seems to be no direct evidence that carnelian stands for a female and lapis lazuli stands for a male child. But the gender of the Akkadian *sāmtu* and *uqnû* do suggest this distribution."¹⁹⁹ Gold and silver were regularly used to construct not only the divine statue itself but also its jewelry and the decoration applied to its garments,²⁰⁰ so it is not surprising that the *mīs pī pīt pī* incantations state specifically that gold and silver were used to form both the image and its crown.²⁰¹

Thus, while the tamarisk container and the water, precious stones, and metals in it could certainly have been used for purification,²⁰² they may also have been related to the construction of the divine statue, as even Berlejung herself acknowledges.²⁰³ The final two ingredients, juniper and *halšu* oil, could have been additional cleansing and purifying agents²⁰⁴ for the "womb" and the gestating embryo, but were likely not used in the physical construction of the image.

A second item for consideration is the brick of the mother-goddess, *Bēlet-ilī*, on which the holy-water vessels were placed in the Babylon edition of the *mīs pī pīt pī*. This brick has generally been understood as the divine counterpart to the brick(s) or birth-stool on which women in antiquity would squat during labor and delivery.²⁰⁵ According to Berlejung, along with other scholars referred to above, the tamarisk *buginnu* was placed on the brick.²⁰⁶ Yet Walker and Dick's translation indicates that the brick supported a single *egubbū* basin.²⁰⁷ The ritual text and their more recent transla-

199. G. Farber, "Another Old Babylonian Childbirth Incantation," *JNES* 43 (1984) 312 and n. 6. The *mīs pī* texts do not state explicitly that carnelian and lapis were used in construction of the statue. Although it is uncertain, they may have been included in the list of materials in Incantation Tablet 3, which is now missing from the text, used by the divine stone-cutter Ninzadim (Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 140, 150 line 64ab).

200. V. Hurowitz, "What Goes in Must Come Out," in *Text, Artifact, and Image: Revealing Ancient Israelite Religion* (ed. G. Beckman and T. J. Lewis; Providence, RI: Brown Judaic Studies, 2006); and Oppenheim, "Golden Garments," 1949.

201. *Image*: In Incantation Tablet 3 the priest states, "this statue is of gold and silver which Kusibanda has made" (62a) [al]am 'kù-gi' kù-babbar 'd'kù-si₂₂-bàn-da mu'-un-dù (62b) ['MIN x x x]x x šá 'd'MIN' [i]b-nu-ù]. This line could also be translated, "this gold (and) silver image (which) 'dKusibanda made" (Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 140, 150). *Crown*: Incantation Tablet 5 *ina hu-ra-ši ru-uš-[šī]-i' ki-niv ú-kan-ni-ma* (ibid., 196 line 13b).

202. Berlejung, "Washing the Mouth," 59 n. 58.

203. Ibid., 58; idem, "Washing the Mouth," 224.

204. As they are in other incantations. See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 103 lines 99–102.

205. See A. Kilmer, "The Brick of Birth," *JNES* 46 (1987) 211–13. A birthing stool is also mentioned in several Hittite birth rituals. See G. Beckman, *Hittite Birth Rituals* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 1983) 23 lines 1–7; 33 lines 5–8; 102 and n. 241.

206. Berlejung, "Washing the Mouth," 58.

207. Walker and Dick, "The Induction of the Cult Image," 116.

tion, however, read *egubbê ina muḫḫi libitti ša Dingirmaḥ tukān*, “holy-water basins you set on the brick of Dingirmaḥ,” in the plural.²⁰⁸ If Walker and Dick’s more recent text and translation are correct, then the seven holy-water basins (*egubbê*) were placed on top of the brick of Dingirmaḥ (*ina muḫḫi libitti ša Dingirmaḥ*),²⁰⁹ but only after the water they contained had been poured into the *buginnu*, as instructed in the previous line: “You fill a *buginnu* of tamarisk wood with the waters of the holy-water basins.”²¹⁰ As a result, the seven *egubbê* were, apparently, empty when they were placed on or near the birthing brick. Regrettably, the ritual texts do not explain the purpose of the seven (empty) vessels (*egubbê*) nor why they were placed on the brick of Dingirmaḥ, but if they were empty, they would not have been used for washing the statue’s mouth.²¹¹

Even if the “womb theory” is unconvincing to some as a holistic explanation, there are numerous allusions to birth in the Washing of the Mouth and Opening of the Mouth ritual and its accompanying incantations that suggest that the mouth-washing and in particular the mouth-opening was, at some level, related to the birth of the divine image. First, there are several direct references to the statue’s birth. The fourth and fifth *šu-illa* prayers in the *mis pî pî pî* begin, “Statue born (tud) in a pure place” and “Statue born (tud) in heaven.”²¹² A third incantation, recited in reference to the divine statue itself, is known by the title, “Born (tud) in heaven by your own power,”²¹³ and a fourth incantation begins, “Statue born (tud) in a pure place.”²¹⁴ The divine birth of the image is indicated with the Sumerian verb *tud*, “to give birth, to bear.” This same verb is used in reference to the creation of royal and divine images from as early as the late 3rd millennium, and its use was perpetuated in 1st-millennium Akkadian texts with the equivalent verb *walādu*.²¹⁵ As Winter notes, the choice of birthing language to express the creation of a statue communicates its “engendered and animate nature.”²¹⁶ This is consistent with the fact that the

208. The phrase *ina muḫḫi* refers to “upon, over, on top.” See CAD M/2 172–73. See Walker and Dick, “The Induction of the Cult Image,” 76–77 line 23; idem, *The Induction*, 71, 75, 78 line 23. Berlejung reports that the tamarisk *buginnu* is placed on the birthing brick (“Washing the Mouth,” 58).

209. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 75 line 23. In *Atra-ḫasis*, the brick is placed between (*i-na be-ru-šu-nu i-ta-di libitta*) the 14 pieces of clay (W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard, *Atraḫasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999] 60–61 line 6). See also Walker and Dick, “The Induction of the Cult Image,” 116–17.

210. Ibid., 75, 78 line 21b.

211. Its mouth would have been washed with water from the holy-water basin of mouth-washing, a vessel distinct from the seven *egubbê* and from the *buginnu*. It is referred to in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 74, 78 line 16.

212. Ibid., 66 lines 189–90 (Nineveh version); 80 line 54 (Babylon version).

213. Ibid., 72 line 42; 80 line 42.

214. Ibid., 184 and 163 line 23ab.

215. Ibid., 21, 22–23.

216. Ibid., 21, 22.

manufacture of statues is described in several royal inscriptions with the Akkadian verb *walādu*, “to give birth,” “to beget,” the equivalent of the Sumerian verb *tud*. In an inscription of Sargon II, it is said that Niššiku (Ea) “begat (*ūlidma*) images of their great divinities,” recalling Ea’s role in the *mīs pī pīt pī* as the father of the image.²¹⁷ In another inscription of Sargon, a series of gods and goddesses is described as “truly born (*i’aldū*) in the midst of Ehursaggalkurkurra, the mountain of the underworld.”²¹⁸

Although *walādu* can be translated simply “to create,” Hurowitz argues, based on two additional inscriptions, that the context suggests that birth rather than manufacture is what is intended. The first is an inscription of Esarhaddon in which the term *zārû*, “inseminator,” rather than *abu*, “father,” is used to describe Ešarra, the father’s (“inseminator’s”) house where the gods were born. The inscription therefore mentions that the gods “grew beautiful in figure (*immaldūma išmuḫū gattu*).”²¹⁹ Hurowitz comments, “In the inscriptions of both Sargon and Esarhaddon the gods are conceived, born, and mature in the presence of their parents in the temple of Assur (Aššur?), and afterwards go off to live in their own homes.”²²⁰ He states further that the image “is not the product of an artisan—not even of the divine craftsman Ea—but born of the loins of the gods and goddesses.”²²¹

Furthermore, the *mīs pī pīt pī* ritual texts and incantations repeatedly name Ea as the statue’s father,²²² and the statue is referred to as “child (*dumu*) of heaven, child (*dumu*) of Enki.”²²³ In Incantation Tablet 4, two mother goddesses are praised for their role in the creative process: “The Tigris, the Mother of the Mountain, carried within her the pure waters. *Bēlet-ilī*, the mother of the Land, raised you on her pure lap.”²²⁴ The little known

217. A. V. Hurowitz, “The Solar Calendar,” 151.

218. *Ibid.*, 151.

219. *Ibid.*, 152.

220. *Ibid.*, 152.

221. *Ibid.*, 152. Hurowitz also suggests that the verb *kunnû*, “to tend with care,” especially used of a child, indicates that these rituals are concerned with the birth and early childhood of the image (*ibid.*, 152). This verb does appear in *mīs pī* Incantation Tablet 4 in the context of the “birth” and care of the newborn divine image, “Ninzadim, the great stonecutter of Anu, with his pure hands cared for you” (MIN MIN šá a-nim ina ŠU-šú KÙ.MEŠ ki-niš ú-kan-ni-ka; Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 164, 184 lines 29ab–30ab). Hurowitz also suggests that opening the mouth with ghee and honey may refer to the feeding of the infant divine statue (“The Solar Calendar,” 152 n. 18).

222. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 57 line 61; 63 (NR); 70 line 4; 77 line 4.

223. In Incantation Tablet 1/2 in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 100 line 99; 103 line 99. This same father-child relationship between image and deity is attested on one of the Gudea statues in the epithet of the deified king of Lagash, “Legitimate son [dum u tu-da] of the god Gatumdu” (Winter, “Idols of the King,” 21). Note Berlejung’s comments, “The statue was treated like a new-born child,” and “The text of the ritual gives several hints that the new statue was regarded as a new-born child of Ea” (“Washing the Mouth,” 57 and n. 52).

224. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 163–64, 184 lines 25ab–28ab. See also Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 169, 185 line 58ab, “on the pure lap of your Mother Nintu.”

Narudi (likely an alternative spelling for Narundi²²⁵) is also invoked in the *pīt pī*. This goddess is known from childbirth incantations as an assistant to the mother in labor.²²⁶ Boden comments, “The inclusion of Narudi associated with *Bēlet-ilī* in this commentary is further testimony to the learned background of the author of the text. The scribe . . . is aware of the generative process underway and the significance of the presence of the brick of *Bēlet-ilī*.”²²⁷ In this same text, the gods whose bricks were laid in the *bit mummi* are listed.²²⁸ Among them are Anšar and Kišar, the ancient progenitors of Anu, who fathered Nudimmud, also known as Ea.²²⁹ In addition, the ritual from Ashur²³⁰ suggests that elements of the mouth-washing and opening ritual were conducted in a birthing hut (Sumerian *tūr*).²³¹

In addition to the internal evidence from the mouth-washing and mouth-opening texts and incantations themselves, external support for the idea that the *pīt pī* in particular was understood, at least in part, as a birthing ceremony is suggested by several Late Babylonian baby incantations. In the first example, the human baby is described, prior to its birth, as the “inhabitant of the darkness, who has never seen the dawn” and as “the one who lived in the darkness, where it is not light.”²³² Once born, however, the baby “has come out and has seen the light of the sun.”²³³ This association of birth with “seeing the light of the sun” recalls the repeated command in the Nineveh version of the *mīs pī pīt pī* to position the divine statue facing east so that it would see the first rays of the sun on the second day of the ceremony.²³⁴ As Maul and Berlejung have noted, Mesopotamian rituals often associate the rising sun with animation and rebirth.²³⁵ This equation of birth with seeing the sun also explains why the opening of the eye in particular was so important, and, perhaps, why the

225. Boden, *The Mesopotamian Washing*, 164.

226. Ibid.

227. Ibid., 165.

228. Ibid., 166.

229. See *Enūma Eliš*, Tablet 1:13–14 in P. Talon, *The Standard Babylonian Creation Myth Enūma Eliš: Introduction, Cuneiform Text, Transliteration, and Sign List with a Translation and Glossary in French* (Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2005) 33; Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 242 n. 77.

230. A. 418/TuL 27. Walker and Dick, “The Induction of the Cult Image,” 103–17.

231. Ibid. 110 n. 124, 115; M. Dick, “The Mesopotamian Cult Statue: A Sacramental Encounter with Divinity,” in *Cult Image and Divine Representation in the Ancient Near East* (ed. N. H. Walls; Boston, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2005) 62. On the birthing hut, see Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness*, 107.

232. Farber, *Schlaf, Kindchen, Schlaf*, 162–63, §30 and 164–65, §32. The origin of this incantation is unknown.

233. Ibid., 162–63, §30; 164–65, §32; 162 §40; 163 §26.

234. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 59 line 97 and n. 82.

235. Maul *Zukunftsbewältigung*, 125; Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth,” 57 and n. 49. Similarly in Egypt see J. Assmann, *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt* (trans. D. Lorton; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001) 44–45.

eye, rather than the nose or ear, was singled out in the Babylon version of the ritual.²³⁶

Second, the sensory organs, particularly the ears and eyes, were apparently considered inactive prior to birth. Two Late Babylonian baby incantations refer to the unborn child as blind and deaf.²³⁷ If the *pīt pī* in particular was, at least in part, a birthing ceremony, this would explain why the divine statue's sensory organs, particularly its eyes and ears, had to be activated. Like the human baby, it too must have been considered blind and deaf prior to birth as it formed inside the darkness of the womb.

In light of the numerous references to birth within the *mīs pī pīt pī* texts and incantations, the external texts that describe the creation of divine images based on the analogy of human birth, and the incantations for human babies which describe the unborn child in terms reminiscent of the divine statue as it undergoes the activation process, it is reasonable to suggest that, at some level, the mouth-opening ritual was concerned with the birth and growth of the divine statue. However, this is not the only way the ritual texts describe the creation of a divine image. Despite the numerous references and allusions to the birth of the image and the reference to it as a "god" (*ilu*) from the beginning of the rite,²³⁸ the *manufacture* of the divine statue is also a prominent theme in the mouth-washing and mouth-opening ceremony.²³⁹

3.3.4.2. *Manufacturing Imagery in the mīs pī pīt pī*

The Nineveh version of the mouth-washing ceremony states that the "god" (*ilu*) was made, created, or engendered (*banû*) in the *bīt mārē ummāni* or *bīt mummi*, the temple workshop where divine statues and their garments, decorations, and paraphernalia were skillfully wrought and repaired.²⁴⁰

236. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 76, 80 line 53. See also Berlejung, "Washing the Mouth," 66–67 and n. 82.

237. Farber, *Schlaf, Kindchen, Schlaf*, 165, §1; 95, §29. The more complete text in *ibid.*, 95, §29, describes the child as "blind one, who doesn't see, deaf one who doesn't hear, offspring of the darkness."

238. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 52, 70, 77 line 1.

239. Contra Hurowitz, who claims that the *mīs pī* ceremony reflects that "the god was born biologically and not fabricated mechanically" ("The Solar Calendar," 151).

240. *Engendered*: The verb *banû* can refer to birth. Note the examples in CAD B 87–88, where *banû* A (2, 3) describes the creation of humankind or a specific king, especially those cases where *banû* is used for the act of engendering humans in the womb. See also *Enūma Eliš* 1:9, 12 (N form *ib-ba-nu-ū-ma*) and 1:105, where *ib-ni-ma* is parallel to *ū-al-lid*, the G form of *alādu*, "to bear, give birth." *Bīt mārē ummāni* or *bīt mummi* Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 57, 70, 74, 77 line 1. *Skillfully wrought*: High value was placed not only on the raw materials from which divine statues were made but on the quality of the craftsmanship reflected in the construction of the image, its garments, and its decoration. See I. Winter, "Surpassing Work: Mastery of Materials and the Value of Skilled Production in Ancient Sumer," in *Culture through Objects: Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honour of P. R. S. Moorey* (ed. Michael Roaf and Diana Stein Timothy Potts; Oxford: Cambridge University Press,

This construction process is described in incantation STT 199,²⁴¹ which was recited as the divine statue was ushered from the workshop to the river. The text begins with a long list of the various sacred trees from which the core of a divine statue could be hewn. It continues, “the prayer for a statue (alam) is heard.”²⁴² Ninildu “touches” the statue’s limbs with an axe, a chisel, and a saw; Ninkurra colors its eyes; and Kusibanda “works” the statue.²⁴³ Although the materials are said to be pure and of divine origin, the divine statue, three times referred to as an *alam/šalmu* rather than an *ilu*, is manufactured by the craft deities who form its wooden body with carpenter’s tools and provide it with eyes of paint or inlaid precious stones.²⁴⁴ Although the role of human craftsmen is ritually denied,²⁴⁵ as we have seen, the mouth-washing and mouth-opening texts do not attempt to hide the fact that the divine statue was constructed from raw materials. On the contrary, the contribution of the craft deities as manifestations of Ea, the divine craftsman *par excellence*, is a prominent theme.²⁴⁶ As with the “birth” of the statue, the manufacturing process is also imagined as undertaken by the gods.

This theme is also present in the incantation entitled “As you grew up,”²⁴⁷ which emphasizes the statue’s origins as a tree growing in the midst of a forest. This tree is then cut down by Ninildu, the carpenter of Anu: “The axe which touched you is great and the chisel which touched you is magnificent, the saw which touched you is the pure, sharp saw of the gods. With the golden axe, with the hatchet (made from) the wood of the box tree, he (Ninildu) cared for you.”²⁴⁸

Perhaps the most significant incantation from the *mīs pī pīt pī* in the present discussion is “When the god was fashioned, the pure statue completed,”²⁴⁹ which reads:

54ab it was made(created) (dīm/*banû*) in the heavens, it was made(created)
(dīm/*banû*) on earth.

2003) 403–21. *Repaired*: Heidel, “The Meaning of Mummu,” also quoted in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 52 n. 34.

241. *Ibid.*, 119–20.

242. *Ibid.*, 120 line 32.

243. *Works*: The verb is *gar-ra*, the meaning of which includes, “to prepare, make, establish.” See *gar*[NIG2](-*ra*) in J. Halloran, *Sumerian Lexicon: A Dictionary Guide to the Ancient Sumerian Language* (Los Angeles: Logogram, 2006) 96. *The Statue*: Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 116 and 120 lines 33–39.

244. See also *alam/šalmu* in *ibid.*, 149 line 35.

245. *Ibid.*, 65–66 lines 173–86; 76, 80 lines 49–52.

246. *Ibid.*, 66. Note also the incantation entitled, “Ninildu, great carpenter of Anu,” and the ritual offerings that were made to the craft deities Ninkurra, Kusibanda, Ninildu, and Ninzadim (*ibid.*, 60, 64; see also 67 line 201; 79 lines 27–28; 149 line 43).

247. *Ibid.*, 184.

248. *Ibid.*, 184 lines 5ab–8ab.

249. *Ibid.*, 138–41, 150–51.

- 55ab this statue (alam) was made (dím /banû) in the entire heavens and earth;
 56ab this statue grew up in a forest of *ḥašur*-cedar
 57ab this statue went out from a mountain, a pure place;
 58ab the statue is the product of gods and humans (or has the features of both . . .)
 59ab the statue (has) eyes which Ninkurra has made
 60ab the statue (has) . . . which Ninagal has made;
 61ab the statue (has) features which Ninzadim has made;
 62ab the statue is of gold and silver which Kusibanda has made;
 63ab [the statue] which Ninildu has made;
 64ab [the statue] which Ninzadim has made
 65ab this statue of *ḥulālu*-stone, *ḥulāl inī*-stone, *muššaru*-stone
 66ab *pappardillû*-stone, [*pappardillû*-stone, *dušû*-stone], “choice-stone”
 66b *ḥulālu parrû* [
 67ab *elmešu*, *antasurrû* stone . . .
 68ab by the skill of the *gurgurru*-craftsmen.
 69ab This statue which Ninkurra, Ninagal, Kusibanda, Ninildu, Ninzadim have made,
 70ab his statue cannot smell incense without the “Opening of the Mouth” ceremony,
 71 ab it cannot eat food nor drink water.

Clearly, this incantation celebrates the manufacture of the divine statue, which was fashioned both “by the skill of the *gurgurru*-craftsmen,”²⁵⁰ artisans known for their proficiency in woodworking, metallurgy, and inlay work, and by a team of divine craftsmen, who are said to make or create (dím/*banû*) the image, particularly its eyes, features, and other parts of its body.²⁵¹ The manufacturing process is highlighted further by the emphasis on the purity and preciousness of the materials used to make the statue and by the fact that the statue is referred to as *alam/šalmu* 15 times in this incantation alone, compared to the single use of *dingir (ilu)* in line 94²⁵² after the 14th and final mouth opening.

One of the incantations in Incantation Tablet 4, however, presents a combination of birthing and manufacturing imagery. The incantation en-

250. Ibid., 140, 151 line 68ab.

251. *Inlay work*: CAD G 137–39. See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 139–40, 150 lines 59ab–64ab; 151 line 69ab.

252. *15 times*: The statue is also referred to as *alam/šalmu* in the incipit. See ibid., 135–36, 149 line 49ab. *Single use*: The statue is also referred to as *dingir/ilu* in the incipit. See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 135–36, 149 line 49ab. See ibid., 144, 151 line 94.

titled, "Statue born (tud) in heaven,"²⁵³ names two mother goddesses: "The Tigris, the Mother of the Mountain, carried within her the pure waters. *Bēlet-ilī*, the mother of the Land, raised you (the statue) on her pure lap."²⁵⁴ Toward the end of the incantation, there is also a reference to "the pure lap of your (the statue's) Mother, Nintu,"²⁵⁵ whose name literally means, "lady of birth." The text also refers to Ninzadim, the great stonecutter of Anu, whose "pure hands [steadily] cared for you" (*ki-niš ú-kan-ni-ka*), the divine statue.²⁵⁶ The verb *ú-kan-ni-ka* is from *kunnu*, "to treat an object with tender care, to treat a small child tenderly," suggesting Ninzadim's paternal affection for his "child" whom he creates.²⁵⁷

This incantation appears to be the only example in the *mīs pî pî pî* texts where the *realia* of divine statue manufacture and the analogy of human care for a newborn child are presented together within the same few lines. However, when the ritual texts and incantations are viewed as a whole, they present the "god" as both born *and* manufactured. The mouth-washing texts do not explain how these two modes of creation functioned in tandem. Rather, birth and manufacture are simply presented as the means by which the physical manifestation of a god comes into being.

This idea is not without precedent. A striking combination of birth and manufacturing imagery appears in a royal hymn describing the supernatural origins of the Assyrian king Tukulti-Ninurta I (1244–1208/1233–1197 B.C.E.). The text, which is part of an epic poem glorifying the king, reads, "By the decision of the lord of all the lands (Enlil), he (Tukulti-Ninurta) was successfully engendered through/cast into (*ši-pi-ik-šu*) the channel (*ra-a-aṭ*) of the womb of the gods."²⁵⁸ P. Machinist comments, "The imagery of the

253. The Akkadian title, given only in English in *ibid.*, 184 n. 82, is, "Statue which Anu created."

254. *Ibid.*, 164, 184 lines 25ab–28ab.

255. *Ibid.*, 185 line 158ab. For more on Nintu's associations with birth, see G. Cunningham, *Deliver Me from Evil: Mesopotamian Incantations 2500–1500 B.C.* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1997), 78; and T. Jacobsen, "Notes on Nintur," *Or* 42 (1972) 274–98.

256. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 164, 184 lines 29ab–30ab.

257. The term refers generally to treating a person kindly but can be used specifically in reference to caring for a young child. See CAD K 541; and Hurowitz, "The Solar Calendar," 152.

258. *Ši-pi-ik-šu*: In an 8th-century B.C.E. inscription of Sennacherib, the king praises Aššur, the self-created fashioner (*ptk*) of heaven and the maker (*epešu*) of all habitations, "who pours out (*ša-pi-ik*) the Igigi and the Anunnaki" (CAD Š 418d). See also the Neo-Assyrian text of Adad-narari II in which he claims that the gods not only shaped and constructed him but "poured wisdom into my lordly body" (*zu-mur bēlū-ti-ia iš-pu-uk [ta]-ši-im-[ta]*); P. Machinist, "Kingship and Divinity in Imperial Assyria," in *Text, Artifact and Image: Revealing Ancient Israelite Religion* [ed. G. Beckman and T. J. Lewis; Providence, RI: Brown Judaic Studies, 2006, 177]. Both texts allude to the smelting process of molten metal.

Womb of the gods: *Ibid.*, 161 line 17. See also *idem*, "Literature as Politics: The Tukulti-Ninurta Epic and the Bible," *CBQ* 38 (1976). The term *rātu* refers both to the birth canal

line is two-fold: Tukulti-Ninurta is both born through the birth canal of the mother goddess and cast as though he were metal being formed into a statue.²⁵⁹ This description of Tukulti-Ninurta's divine origins would be meaningless if there had been no tradition that divine images were created through the dual process of birth and manufacture. There must have been a long-standing tradition, and indeed, there was, from the Sumero-Babylonian south, with which Tukulti-Ninurta I was aligning himself in order to establish that he was "the eternal image (*šalmu*) of Enlil" as he claimed.²⁶⁰ In other words, Tukulti-Ninurta I must have been familiar with the idea that a genuine living image (*šalmu*) of a god came into being only through this dual process. He thus employed this imagery to describe his own origins as a means of establishing his status as the divinely appointed king who was also the living image of Enlil.

3.3.5. Conclusion

The Mesopotamian mouth-washing and mouth-opening ritual was a two-day event that was carried out in several different locations, each of which represented in physical form a mythological space within the divine sphere. The human craftsmen's workshop was, ultimately, the workshop of the craft deities Ninkurra, Ninagal, Kusibanda, Ninildu, and Ninzadim, and of the patron deity of craftsmen, Ea, who was named in the *mis pî pî pî* as the father of the image under construction.²⁶¹ The riverbank stood at the gateway to the *Apsû*, Ea's subterranean watery abode, and granted the priests access to the holy water and to Ea himself. The attached garden, known [in Babylon] as "the garden of the *Apsû*," was also Ea's domain. This was where most of the animating acts took place, including the opening of the statue's eyes. It was in the garden that the image was fed with fruit and clothed with divine regalia and insignia, which included an exalted crown radiating divine splendor in all directions. Once created, born, fully animated and adorned, the image was then installed in its temple home and fed its first full meal.

I have sought to demonstrate that, according to the *mis pî pî pî*, the creation of a divine statue was not primarily a ritual of purification, although

and to a "channel" through which molten metal is poured (see *rātu* in KAV 205: 28 in CAD R, 219–20, esp. definition d: *naglebē ša ḥassupī u ša šupri ina ra-aṭ siparri . . . liš-pu-uk*, "let them cast the razors, tweezers, and fingernail clippers in tubes (*ra-aṭ*) for bronze").

259. Machinist, "Literature as Politics," 462 n. 23. The ambiguity in line 17 (*ina ra-aṭ šassuru ši-pi-ik-šu i-te-eš-ra*) is deliberate. See idem, "Kingship and Divinity," 162.

260. The translation is from idem, "Literature as Politics," 455–82 and 465–66. Machinist has demonstrated that these innovations began in Assyria with Tukulti-Ninurta I, but they were influenced by the royal theology of the Sumero-Babylonian south, where the idea of divine parentage and the king as the *šalmu* of the god is present in Sumerian hymns, royal inscriptions, rituals, personal names, and legal texts (*The Epic of Tukulti Ninurta I: A Study in Middle Assyrian Literature* [Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1978] 180–208).

261. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 150–51 lines 59ab–69ab.

clearly purity was of utmost concern. Nor was it modeled exclusively on the analogy of human procreation and birth. Rather, the creation of the divine image was achieved through two complementary and requisite processes. The image was born through ritual means, as Ebeling, Jacobsen, and Boden have recognized, but it was also physically constructed from wood, precious metals, and gemstones. Manufacture did not preclude birth, nor did birth preclude manufacture. The two modes of creation functioned concurrently to produce not a *representation* of the divine but, as indicated by the birthing language and imagery in the *pîṯ pî*, as well as by the animation of the image's sensory organs and the offerings of food, drink, clothing, and shelter (in the temple), what was considered to be a *physical, living manifestation* of an otherwise invisible reality.

3.4. The Opening of the Mouth (wpt-r) Ritual in Ancient Egypt

3.4.1. Introduction

The Opening of the Mouth ceremony was one of the most significant and complex of all ancient Egyptian rituals. Abundant textual references and artistic depictions of the rite attest to its enduring prominence in Egyptian cultic life from the Old Kingdom through the Late Period. The full title of the ceremony was Performing the Opening of the Mouth in the Workshop for the Statue (*tut*) of N, but it was also known by two shorter designations, Opening of the Mouth (*wpt-r* and *wn-r*), and Opening of the Mouth and the Eyes.²⁶² Over the course of its lengthy history, the ritual was used not only to “animate” divine statues but to enliven a variety of inanimate objects, including statues of the dead, mummies, anthropoid sarcophagi, ushabtis, heart scarabs, figurines, the prow of a boat, and, in Late Greco-Roman Egypt, an entire temple and a magical ring.²⁶³ In each

262. Full title: D. Lorton, “God’s Beneficent Creation Coffin Texts Spell 1130, The Instructions for Merikare, and the Great Hymn to the Aton,” *SAK* 20 (1993) 147; E. Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1960) 2:34.

The verb *wpi*’ denotes opening by parting, separating, or dividing, and is used in reference to the opening of the womb in childbirth. See A. E. Grapow and H. Grapow, *Wörterbuch der Ägyptischen Sprache* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1925) 1:299–300 (D II); R. O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford: Butler & Tanner, 2002) 59; A. M. Roth, “Opening of the Mouth,” in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* (ed. by D. B. Redford; 3 vols.; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) 2:606.

The word *wn* means “to open” or “to open up,” and when it refers to the “opening” of various body parts, it functions as a synonym of *wpi*’. See Grapow and Grapow, *Wörterbuch der Ägyptischen*, 2.311 B. 2-312; *wn* and *wn-r* in Hannig, *Ägyptisches Wörterbuch I: Altes Reich Und Erste Zwischenzeit* (Hannig-Lexica 5; Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern, 2006) 672–76; Faulkner, *Middle Egyptian*, 60–61.

Opening of the Mouth and Eyes: Lorton, “God’s Beneficent Creation,” 147.

263. Boat: J.-C. Goyon, *Rituels funéraires de l’ancienne Égypte: Le rituel de l’embaumement, le rituel de l’ouverture de la bouche, les livres des respirations* (Paris: du Cerf, 1972) 90 n. 1.

case, the purpose of the ritual was to make the object fit for cultic use. When applied to statues and mummies specifically, the *wpt-r* was thought to (re)animate the recipient, enabling it to see, hear, smell, breathe, move about, and consume offerings of food and drink.

3.4.2. Sources

The earliest references to the Egyptian Opening of the Mouth ritual date to the Old Kingdom. The Palermo stone, a fragmentary basalt stele inscribed with the royal annals of mythological and historical kings from Dynasties I–V (ca. 3100/3050–2345 B.C.E.), twice mentions the mouth-opening of divine statues.²⁶⁴ The first allusion to the ritual marks the regnal year of King Neferirkara (Fifth Dynasty) and refers to “creating images of the gods” (*mst ntrw*) and “creation and (performing the) opening-of-the-mouth (ceremony on) an electrum statue of (the god) Ihy” (*ms(t) wpt-r ḏꜥm ꜥIḥꜥi*) while the second reads, “the fashioning and opening of the mouth of (the statue of) god *x* in the goldsmiths’ quarter/Hatnub” ([*god x*] *mst wpt-r m ḥwt-nbw*).²⁶⁵ An additional reference to the *wpt-r* on Cairo Fragment 2 from the reign of Khufu reads *ms(t) wp-r(3) ḥr-ntrw . . . ḥnmw?* “creating and (performing the) ‘opening of the mouth’ (ceremony) for (a divine image of) ‘Horus of the gods’? and Khnum?”²⁶⁶

The next attestation of the *wpt-r* appears in a mid-third millennium B.C.E. dedicatory inscription found in the sun temple of Nyuserre at Abu Ghurob (Abu Ghurab) near Abusir (Fifth Dynasty, ca. 2400 B.C.E.). The relevant por-

Temple: A. M. Blackman and H. W. Fairman, “The Consecration of an Egyptian Temple according to the Use of Edfu II,” *JEA* 32 (1946) 75–91. *Ring*: I. S. Moyer and J. Dieleman, “Miniaturization and the Opening of the Mouth in a Greek Magical Text (PGM XII.270–350),” *JANES* 3 (2003) 47–72.

264. On the Palermo stone, see the comprehensive and definitive edition of ancient Egypt’s royal annals in T. A. H. Wilkinson, *Royal Annals of Ancient Egypt: The Palermo Stone and Its Associated Fragments* (London: Kegan Paul, 2000).

265. *Mst ntrw*: *Ibid.*, 172, PS v.IV.3 line 1. The Egyptian verb is *msiꜥ*, which literally means, “to bear, give birth.” See *msj* in Grapow and Grapow, *Wörterbuch der Aegyptischen*, 2:137; *msiꜥ* in Faulkner, *Middle Egyptian*, 116; and the discussion in J. Zandee, “The Birth-Giving Creator-God in Ancient Egypt,” in *Studies in Pharaonic Religion and Society in Honour of J. Gwyn Griffiths* (ed. Alan B. Lloyd; London: Whitstable Litho, 1992) 169–85. Zandee claims, “The translation ‘create’ may, in some cases, be correct. It is, however, preferable to keep the original meaning ‘bear, give birth,’ when the verb *msiꜥ* refers to the activity of the creator-god” (“The Birth-Giving Creator God,” 169). *Ihy*: Wilkinson, *Royal Annals of Ancient Egypt*, 173, PS v.IV.3 line 7. *Ihy* was the daughter of Hathor. For the second allusion, see Roth, “Opening of the Mouth,” 2:606.

266. Cairo fragment 2 (JdE 39735), CF 2, is one of seven surviving fragments of the early Egyptian royal annals. The other fragments include CF 1, CF 3, CF 4, CF 5, and the London fragment, LF. On the relationship among the seven stones, see Wilkinson, *Royal Annals of Ancient Egypt*, 17–28, esp. pp. 24–28, and figs. 1–12. There is considerable debate as to whether or not the fragments belonged originally to one monument. Wilkinson concludes that they represent at least two annal stones (*Royal Annals of Ancient Egypt*, 27, 28). See Wilkinson, *Royal Annals of Ancient Egypt*, 224–25, text CF2 r.L.1.

tion of the text, published only in German translation, reads, “Herstellen und Mundöffnen [im Goldhaus] Statue des Re und der Hathor [Machen] dieses . . . aus Elektron.”²⁶⁷ Although these texts include no further ritual details, they are significant because they attest to the fact that, very early in Egyptian history, the *wpt-r* was performed on statues of the gods. Based on the use of the verb *msi*’, “to give birth, bear,” these texts also suggest, as will be discussed below, that like its Mesopotamian counterpart, the *wpt-r* was, at least, in part, a ritual of the statue’s birth.

Unlike the *mīs pī pīt pī*, however, the Egyptian *wpt-r* is also attested, as I briefly stated in chapter 1, in funerary contexts where it was applied to statues of the deceased and mummies as a means of rebirth, reanimating the dead so that they could receive sustenance in the afterlife. In fact, aside from the few historical references noted above, all of the evidence for the Egyptian *wpt-r* is funerary in nature. The earliest mortuary attestation comes from the tomb of Metjen, a prominent Old Kingdom official from Fourth Dynasty (ca. 2600 B.C.E.).²⁶⁸ The ritual is also mentioned in the earliest edition of the Pyramid Texts (PT), the PT of Unas (ca. 2375–2345 B.C.E.) from the Fifth Dynasty and in the PT from the Sixth Dynasty.²⁶⁹ That the ritual continued into the Middle Kingdom is attested by the PT texts recorded on the walls of private tombs from this period and by the Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts (CT).²⁷⁰

The most substantial evidence for the Egyptian Opening of the Mouth ritual dates to the New Kingdom, where texts with accompanying pictorial representations appear in over eighty private tombs and on at least 28 tomb stelae.²⁷¹ Although most of the examples provide only an abbreviated version of the mouth-opening ritual, often concentrated in one picture that is unaccompanied by text, several of the examples preserve detailed accounts, both in text and in image, of the ritual acts involved.²⁷² The earliest, most comprehensive, and best-preserved New Kingdom example

267. “Fashioning and Mouth-Opening in the Gold House of the statues of Re and Hathor [they make] this [. . .] out of electron,” in W. Helck, “Die ‘Weihinschriften’ aus dem Taltempel des Sonnenheiligtums des Königs Neuserre bei Abu Gurob,” *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur* 5 (1977) 47–77, pl. 3 line 5, and p. 70 line 5. Helck did not provide the original Egyptian text nor its transliteration.

268. R. Lepsius, *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1897–1913), vol. 2, pls. 4–5.

269. *Fifth Dynasty*: See A. Piankoff, *The Shrines of Tut-Ankh-Amon* (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1962) 78, Spell 30, Utterance 38. *Sixth Dynasty*: Roth, “Opening of the Mouth,” 2:607; idem “Opening of the Mouth,” in *The Ancient Gods Speak: A Guide to Egyptian Religion* (ed. D. Redford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) 296.

270. See A. de Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935–2006), 1:265; 3:312, 325, 339.

271. See the extensive bibliography in A. R. Schulman, “The Iconographic Theme: ‘Opening of the Mouth’ on Stelae” *JARCE* 21 (1984) 171 n. 19.

272. See, for example, N. de Garis Davies and A. H. Gardiner, *The Tomb of Amenemhat* (London: Egyptian Exploration Fund, 1915) 57–61 and pl. 17; and G. Lefebvre, *Le tombeau*

was found on the northern wall in the tomb-chapel of Rekhmire, vizier of Egypt under Thutmose III and Amenhotep II (Eighteenth Dynasty, ca. 1450 B.C.E.).²⁷³

3.4.3. Previous Studies

The earliest studies on the Egyptian mouth-opening ritual were the notes of Champollion and Rossellini published by E. Schiaparelli,²⁷⁴ which were republished and updated by E. A. Wallis Budge in 1909.²⁷⁵ Budge's work represents one of the earliest attempts to understand the *wpt-r*, which he interpreted as the ritual reconstitution of the deceased's body and the restoration of its *ba* (heart-soul) and its *ka* (its double).²⁷⁶ His translation of the Opening of the Mouth ritual, however, has been superseded by the more accurate and complete translation of Eberhard Otto.²⁷⁷

In 1924, A. Blackman compared the Egyptian and Babylonian versions of the Opening of the Mouth ritual, noting the similarities in the methods of purification, the use of incense and purified holy water, the animation of the sensory organs, the clothing, investiture, and feeding of the image, and the sweeping of the floor at the close of the rite.²⁷⁸ He concluded that the two rituals were likely derived from a common source, but he allowed for the possibility that one originated from the other. He later published with H. W. Fairman the translation of two Opening of the Mouth ritual texts found on the walls of a Ptolemaic temple of Horus at Edfu.²⁷⁹ The texts appear to be complementary sections of an abbreviated ritual manual for the Opening of the Mouth, which lists by their headings the sequence of ritual acts the priest was to perform.²⁸⁰ However, other than listing the order of events, the texts do not supply any ceremonial detail. For our purposes, it is sufficient to note that some form of the Opening of the Mouth ritual survived into the Ptolemaic period (332/305–30 B.C.E.) and was applied to an Egyptian temple for the purpose of bringing the entire structure to life.

de Petosiris. Troisième Partie: Vocabulaire et Planches (Cairo: L'institut Français D'archéologie Orientale, 1923) pls. 28–30.

273. N. de G. Davies, *The Tomb of Rekhmire at Thebes* (2 vols.; New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1943). See also the transliteration and translation of the "Opening the Mouth" text from the tomb of Rekhmire published online by Stephen Quirke, "Contents of the Ritual for 'Opening the Mouth': The Selection of 51 Episodes in the Tomb-Chapel of Rekhmire, in the Sequence in Which They Occur," (London: University College, 2003. Online: <http://www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/religion/wpr2.html>).

274. E. Schiaparelli, *Il Libro dei Funerali degli Antichi Egiziani* (Turin: Loescher, 1883–90) 8, 20, 22, 97, 101, 106, 109, 112, 131, 133, 136, 157, 160, 164, 161, 162, 166, etc.

275. E. A. W. Budge, *The Book of Opening the Mouth* (Books on Egypt and Chaldea; London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1909).

276. *Ibid.*, v–vi.

277. Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*.

278. Blackman, "The Rite of Opening the Mouth," 1924.

279. Blackman and Fairman, "The Consecration of an Egyptian Temple," 1946.

280. *Ibid.*, 86.

Blackman and Fairman comment, "The idea evidently was that not only the cultus-statues were enabled to become alive and active through the due performance of this rite, but the figures in the wall reliefs also and the entire edifice with all its appurtenances."²⁸¹

T. J. C. Baly agreed that the *wpt-r* was concerned with bringing the image to life, but he concluded that the core of the ritual centered on finding and restoring the deceased's soul to its body, that is, to its statue or mummy.²⁸² His conclusions were based largely on the comparative study of Nigerian rituals for the dead in which a priest washed the corpse, anointed its eyes with blood in order to "open" them, and then "fed" the deceased.²⁸³ This was done to "give rest" to the soul prior to burial. The remainder of the Egyptian mouth-opening ceremony, he claimed, originated in various Egyptian solar rites for purification and adornment. Baly was certainly right about the composite nature of the Egyptian *wpt-r*, but he failed to demonstrate the relevance of the Nigerian parallels. His conclusion that the *wpt-r* was primarily a rite concerned with recovering and restoring the deceased soul, therefore, is suspect.

The most comprehensive treatment of the Egyptian mouth-opening ritual was published in 1960 by Eberhard Otto. His two-volume work, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, consisted of a translation, commentary, and analysis of the New Kingdom version of the *wpt-r*.²⁸⁴ He argued that seven different rituals, including rituals for the statue, for sacrifices, for embalming, for burial, for slaughtering, and for the temple, were combined to form the New Kingdom version of the Opening of the Mouth.²⁸⁵ The New Kingdom text, he claimed, was thus a complex and confusing ritual containing ancient and often unintelligible words and concepts which even the New Kingdom priests may not have understood.²⁸⁶ The oldest layer, according to Otto, was the statue ritual.²⁸⁷ The rite was then transferred into the funerary realm where it was used to re-animate the deceased. Despite a few erroneous readings,²⁸⁸ Otto's translation is still considered largely reliable. I will use his work in my own summary of the *wpt-r*, below in §3.4.4.

Nearly two decades after Otto's work was published, R. Finnestad argued that the goal of the Opening of the Mouth differed depending on

281. Ibid., 85.

282. T. J. C. Baly, "Notes on the Ritual of Opening the Mouth," *JEA* 16 (1930) 173–86.

283. As discussed in N. W. Thomas, "Some Ibo Burial Customs," *JRAI* 47 (1917) 160–213.

284. Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*.

285. Ibid., 2.

286. Ibid., 3.

287. Ibid., 2–3.

288. See the recent translation of Episodes 9–12 in H.-W. Fischer-Elfert, *Die Vision von der Statue im Stein: Studien zum altägyptischen Mundöffnungsritual* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Carl Winter, 1998).

the type of object being revived. When the *wpt-r* was performed initially on a statue of the dead, he claimed that it bestowed “a general operative competence” that transformed the statue from a lifeless form to a living, cultic body of the dead.²⁸⁹ The image was then considered a living being which could now function on earth.²⁹⁰ However, when additional mouth-openings were performed on the same image—for example, prior to certain festivals—the purpose was to enable the statue to consume offerings of food and drink.²⁹¹ The meaning of the ritual differed, however, when it was applied to a mummy. Finnestad claims:

The relationship between the mummy and the statue should be understood within this cultic functionalistic framework, and the performance of the Opening on both objects should, correspondingly, be understood as inaugurations for different functions: Carried out on the statue the ritual makes this symbol of earthly life operative for ritual communication between the living and the dead man, while carried out on the mummy it makes this symbol of a dead god operative for divine residence in the sanctuary (the tomb) in question. The dead man has already, through the mummification, been transformed to Osiris; the purpose of the Opening is to make this Osiris cultically relevant. In this respect the Opening when performed on the mummy has a function that corresponds to the consecration of a divine statue.²⁹²

Finnestad’s assertion that through mummification the deceased had been transformed into Osiris would explain why Unas is frequently addressed as “Osiris Unas” which means, essentially, “Unas who has now become Osiris.”²⁹³ A closer look at the distribution of these two names in the PT of Unas confirms Finnestad’s theory. At entrance to the antechamber, the deceased is referred to as “Unas” but not once as “Osiris Unas.”²⁹⁴ He is first addressed by this double name in the texts that appear in the passage to the sarcophagus chamber (on the North Wall), but there only once.²⁹⁵ Inside the sarcophagus chamber itself, he is initially addressed as “Unas,”²⁹⁶ but beginning with Utterance 38 (on the North Wall), the identity of the mummy changes. After initially being referred to six times as “Unas,”²⁹⁷ he is addressed, *more than 90 times*, as “Osiris Unas,” whereas “Unas” appears

289. R. B. Finnestad, “The meaning and purpose of opening the mouth in mortuary contexts,” *Numen* 25 (1978) 124–25.

290. *Ibid.*, 123 n. 25.

291. *Ibid.*, 126.

292. *Ibid.*, 129–30.

293. Piankoff, *The Shrines*, 78–92. See J. Gwyn Griffiths, “Osiris,” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) 2:617.

294. Piankoff, *The Shrines*, 17–54.

295. *Ibid.*, 57, Utterance 199.

296. *Ibid.*, 59–77.

297. Plus once in parallel with Osiris in *ibid.*, 76, Utterance 32.

only 27 times. Furthermore, the 90-plus appearances of "Osiris Unas" are concentrated in the episodes *in which the mummy's mouth is being opened*.²⁹⁸ Thus, the repeated use of the double-name, and especially its concentration in the Opening of the Mouth episodes, indicate that Finnestad was correct: through the Opening of the Mouth, the mummy was transformed into (the divine statue of) Osiris. This, then, offers a compelling explanation for why the *wpt-r* was employed in the funerary realm: the primary means by which Osiris was manifest in the tomb shrine was through the consecration of his divine statue, the mummy of the deceased.

Some of the most recent work on the *wpt-r* has been done by D. Lorton.²⁹⁹ In his article, he addresses the issue of origins, an important question which will prove relevant to our understanding of the relationship among Gen 2:5–3:24, the *mis pī pīt pī* and the *wpt-r*.³⁰⁰ Did the Egyptian Opening of the Mouth begin in the temple realm and only later spread to funerary contexts, or was it original to the mortuary cult? Lorton demonstrates that even beyond the early references to the performance of the Opening of the Mouth on divine statues, there is additional evidence that the ritual was not confined to the funerary realm. In the daily cult ritual, there are several injunctions for the statue to "open its mouth," which "presuppose the ability of the manufactured object to open its mouth, an ability that surely did not arise on its own but rather had to be effected by ritual—and this in turn implies that the Opening of the Mouth ritual was not confined to the funerary realm."³⁰¹ Its suitability to the temple realm is further suggested by the later application of the Opening of the Mouth to the Ptolemaic temple at Edfu.³⁰² Lorton adds further that no part of the *wpt-r* necessarily originates in the mortuary cult. Rather, "the concerns addressed by the ritual would have been equally applicable to all of the objects on which we know that an opening of the mouth ritual was performed."³⁰³ He acknowledges, however, that the current evidence does not allow us to conclude with certainty that the Opening of the Mouth originated in the temple realm.³⁰⁴ Rather, he proposes that the Egyptians applied the mouth-opening ritual to a variety of inanimate objects because, in each instance, the problem was the same: how to enliven inert matter. Lorton concludes:

298. There are three additional occurrences of "Unas" which are in parallel to "Osiris" in the utterance, "This is thy libation, O Osiris, this is thy libation, O Unas" (Piankoff, *The Shrines*, 57, Utterance 32; 76, Utterance 32; 79, Utterance 32). It is unclear in those three cases if Unas and Osiris are being addressed separately or, rather, if Unas is being equated with Osiris.

299. Lorton, "God's Beneficent Creation."

300. *Ibid.*, 147–79.

301. *Ibid.*, 143, 150–51.

302. Blackman and Fairman, "The Consecration of an Egyptian Temple"; and Lorton, "God's Beneficent Creation," 151.

303. *Ibid.*, 151.

304. *Ibid.*, 133, 152.

The search for origins is frustrated by the silence or relative silence of sources prior to the New Kingdom. . . . It is therefore better to set aside the question of origins as unproductive, noting only that a shared problem . . . led to a shared solution in more than one realm. The more productive approach to these rituals is to consider their salient features, trying to find some movement of thought through the ritual and to determine how the elements function within the overall structure.³⁰⁵

This may also be the most productive approach to our discussion of the relationship between the creation and animation of Adam in the Eden story and the creation of divine images in the *mīs pī pīt pī* and the *wpt-r*. If there is a link among these texts, it may be typological rather than historical. That is, perhaps each source deals independently yet similarly with the shared problem of how to activate a cultic figure. This issue and the relationship between these texts will be discussed further in chapter 5.

Lorton also offers a brief comparison of the Egyptian Opening of the Mouth with its Mesopotamian counterpart, focusing on their views of the image-manufacturing process. He stresses that the Egyptian *wpt-r* does not suppress the physical construction process by which the image is created,³⁰⁶ while this aspect of the ceremony is ritually denied in the *mīs pī pīt pī*. In the latter, as Lorton notes, human involvement is renounced by symbolic gestures and words. Further, Lorton argues that, in contrast to Mesopotamia, in Egypt “the raw materials and the process of manufacture were at least as important as the ritual that ultimately endowed the object with life and effectiveness.”³⁰⁷ What Lorton has overlooked, however, is that the denial in the *mīs pī pīt pī* is applicable only to the *human* craftsmen. As discussed above, the mouth-washing and mouth-opening texts and incantations make it clear that while the divine statue (*alam/šalmu*) is “born in heaven” (*an-na ní-bi-ta tu-ud-da-àm*),³⁰⁸ it is also formed, fashioned, and created (*dím/banû*) by a team of divine craftsmen who construct its body from sacred wood, pure metals, and precious gems.³⁰⁹ Moreover, on the incantation STT 199,³¹⁰ which lists the various woods, precious stones, and pure metals from which the statue was made, as well as the divine craftsmen and the tools used to create the statue’s form, it seems that the materials and the construction process were equally as important in the *mīs pī pīt pī* as they were in the *wpt-r*. The difference between the Mesopotamian and Egyptian rituals is not over whether the divine statue was “constructed.” In both the *wpt-r* and the *mīs pī pīt pī*, this is certainly the case.

305. Ibid., 152.

306. Ibid., 157.

307. Ibid., 158.

308. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 114 line 1 and n. 125.

309. Ibid., 138–41, 150–51.

310. Ibid., 114–22.

The difference, rather, centers on who is ultimately responsible for creating the divine image. In the mouth-washing and mouth-opening ceremonies, full credit is given to the gods alone, while in the *wpt-r* the image is created through a joint effort of the gods and the human artisans. The *wpt-r* commemorates the role of the human craftsman in both text³¹¹ and image, the latter of which is amply demonstrated in a New Kingdom tomb painting that depicts several temple artisans at work on two sarcophagi.³¹² In the lower righthand corner a male figure holds a papyrus on which is written, “performing the Opening of the Mouth.”³¹³

Despite the differences in modern scholarly interpretation we have examined, there is general agreement that the *wpt-r* is a ritual for the revival of an object making it fit for cultic use. Beyond this, however, Roth has marshaled significant evidence that demonstrates that the Egyptian Opening of the Mouth, like the Mesopotamian *mis pi pit pi*, was, at least, in part, a ritual for the birth, or rebirth, of the divine image. Her argument and some additional evidence will be described and evaluated below. First, I will provide a summary of the ritual based largely on its most complete attestation from the New Kingdom.

3.4.4. Summary of the *wpt-r*

E. Otto’s *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual* was, as we have seen, the first comprehensive treatment of the Egyptian mouth-opening ritual. Using a variety of available texts, he attempted to reconstruct a complete version of the *wpt-r*, a task that ultimately proved impossible.³¹⁴ What he did, then, was to provide a history of each individual scene and its accompanying image. However, rather than summarizing Otto’s eclectic text, which is a modern reconstruction, I prefer to present an overview of the Egyptian Opening of the Mouth ritual by using a diplomatic text, that is, one that is actually attested in the historical record. The best candidate is the version found in the New Kingdom tomb-chapel of Rekhmire (Theban Tomb 100), vizier of Egypt under Thutmose III and Amenhotep II (Eighteenth Dynasty, ca. 1450 B.C.E.). This text (R), with its accompanying images, is one of the earliest, most complete, and best-preserved examples of the *wpt-r* available, depicting 51 of the 75 attested scenes. In the footnotes, I will supplement R with Otto’s reconstructed text, particularly in places where Otto presents variants and additional scenes not included in R. For Episodes 9–12, I will also footnote the recent analysis of H. Fischer-Elfert.³¹⁵

311. See the summary of the Opening of the Mouth ritual on p. 96 below, Episodes 12–16.

312. Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, fig. 13.

313. Lorton, “God’s Beneficent Creation,” 158.

314. Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 2.

315. Fischer-Elfert, *Die Vision von der Statue*.

3.4.5. A Summary of the “Opening of the Mouth” Ritual³¹⁶

Introduction: The ritual is introduced by the title, “Performing the opening of the mouth for the statue of N³¹⁷ in the Gold Mansion” (*irt wpt r n twt n N m Hwt-nbw*), that is, the temple workshop³¹⁸ where divine images were created, or, literally, born (*msi*’), under the supervision of Ptah, the patron deity of the craftsmen and of the Opening of the Mouth ritual.³¹⁹

Episode 8. (sequence position no. 1 of 51):³²⁰ The attendant priests enter the tomb-chapel and behold the statue of Rekhmire.

Episode 1. (sequence position no. 2 of 51): The priests position the nude statue on a small mound of sand, facing south,³²¹ and place its clothes behind it on the ground.

Episode 2. (sequence position no. 3 of 51): The priest cleanses the statue with water from four *nemset*-jars while reciting a purificatory incantation. This is followed by the proclamation, “I have fastened for you your head to your bones before Geb. Thoth is the one purifying him entirely as his task (*smn.n.i n.k tp.k r qsw.k xr gb Dhwtj iab sw tm m irt.f*).”

Episode 3. (sequence position no. 4 of 51):³²² The words and actions are similar to those in Episode 2, although here the holy water is poured from four *deshret*-jars.³²³

316. This summary is based on the transliteration and translation of the “Opening the Mouth” text from the tomb of Rekhmire in Stephen Quirke, “Contents of the Ritual for ‘Opening the Mouth’”; and on the line drawing of the accompanying scenes published in Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, pl. 1.

317. “N” represents the name of the individual undergoing the Opening of the Mouth.

318. On the *Hwt-nbw* as the temple workshop where divine statues were manufactured, see *ibid.*, 36.

319. *Ibid.*, 35.

320. The episodes are presented in the order in which they appear in the Rekhmire tomb, but the episode numbers that Quirke employs are those assigned to each scene by Otto in his larger, eclectic text, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*.

321. *Mound of sand*: Otto’s Texts 2, 5, and 34 replace “on a layer of sand” (“Hügel von Sand”) with “in the gold house” (“im Goldhaus”). Otto’s texts 48 and 51 locate the ritual in the tomb (Grab) rather than in the gold house. Text 48 has as its title, “Execution of the Opening of the Mouth in the tomb (*m’hr.t*) on behalf of the statue” (Vollzug der Mundöffnung im Grabe für die Statue). See Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 34 n. 6.

It is unclear as to why the image faced south. See Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 36.

322. The episodes are presented in the order in which they appear in the Rekhmire tomb (the “sequence position” number), but the episode numbers themselves are those assigned by Otto in his larger and eclectic text, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*. I begin with Otto’s “Episode 8” because this is the first scene in the Rekhmire tomb.

323. Otto’s text 59 concludes with “in the midst of your brothers, the gods” (inmitten deiner Brüder, der Götter; *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 43). Otto comments that the water not only cleansed and purified the image but was perhaps an agent of the revival and reconstitution of the body (*Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 41).

Episode 4. (sequence position no. 5 of 51): The priest opens and washes the statue's mouth by touching five balls of natron, equated with the spittle³²⁴ and heart of Horus and Seth, to its mouth, eyes, and arms. He addresses the statue, "O, N! May you taste its taste in front of the divine pavilion (*hA N dp.k dpt.f xnt sH-nTr*)."

Episode 5. (sequence position no. 6 of 51): The statue is purified and "washed" again with five natron pellets. Its mouth is then likened to the mouth of a newborn calf: "Your mouth is the mouth of a milk calf, you who are in the lap of your mother Isis, on the day it is born (*r.k r n bHs irt y imy mndt mwt.k ist hrw ms.f im.f*)."³²⁵

Episode 6. (sequence position no. 7 of 51): The statue of Rekhmire is censured repeatedly as the priest declares, "You are censured, established, between your brothers the gods (*snTr.k Dd.ti imywt snw.k nTrw*)."³²⁶

Episode 7. (sequence position no. 8 of 51): The priest fumigates the statue with another pellet of incense and says, "Pure, pure. Receive the eye of Horus; may the scent reach you (*wab wab min.k irt Hr ii sty r.k*)," indicating that the statue's nose is operative. The period of purification is now complete.

*Episode 9.*³²⁷ (sequence position no. 9 of 51): The *sem*-priest rests or sleeps in the temple workshop, where he receives by divine revelation an outline of the statue's form.³²⁸

Episode 10. (sequence position no. 10 of 51): The *sem*-priest reports that the statue's outline was divinely revealed to him.

324. The number five corresponds to the number of body parts: two eyes, two arms, and one mouth. See *ibid.*, 45. The cleansing and reviving power of saliva is also known from the Egyptian embalming rituals where the substance that fills the mouth is identified as "the sweat of the gods" ("Schweiss der Götter" in *ibid.*, 47). Note the use of divine saliva to create the first humans in *Atrahasis*, Tablet 1 line 234, in Lambert and Millard, *Atra-Hasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969; repr., Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns 1999) 58, 59.

325. Variants refer to "the breasts of your mother Isis" ("an den Brüsten deiner Mutter Isis" in Text 1 in Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 48 n. 11), "on which his mother delivered it" ("an dem seine Mutter es gebar" in Text 4 in *ibid.*, 48 n. 12), and "on the thighs of his mother Isis on the day on which his mother bore him" ("auf den Schenkeln seiner Mutter Isis, an jenem Tage (an) dem seine Mutter es gebar," in Edfou III in *ibid.*, 48). Otto notes that the comparison between the sun-god and a newborn calf suggests that death is being presented as a process of rebirth (*ibid.*).

326. In Otto's translation the incense is held up to the mouth, eyes, and arms (*ibid.*, 49).

327. The following episodes (9–18) refer to the creation of the statue in the Gold House prior to its purification in Episodes 1–8. It is not clear whether the opening of the mouth proper begins with Episode 9, as Otto suggests (*ibid.*, 34), or if Episodes 1–8, which are placed after the ritual title, "Performing the opening of the mouth for the statue of N in the Gold House" (*irt wpt r n twt n N m Hwt-nbw*), were considered part of the *wpt-r* ceremony.

328. See Fischer-Elfert, *Die Vision von der Statue*, 11–21.

(Episode 11. is absent from the Rekhmire sequence.)³²⁹

Episode 12. (sequence position no. 11 of 51): The *sem*-priest implores the sculptors to “Mark my father for me (*Ab n.i it.i*) . . . create my father for me (*irw n.i it.i*) . . . the divine form(er?) (*irw-nTr*) . . . make a likeness of him for me” (*stwt n.i sw*).

Episode 14. (sequence position no. 12 of 51): The priest addresses the statue and speaks to it as he touches its mouth with his little finger. His words include, “I have pressed your mouth for you” (*mDd.n.i n.k r.k*).

Episode 13. (sequence position no. 13 of 51): The priests address the sculptors, “Who is it striking³³⁰ my father (*m Hw it.i*)?”³³¹

Episode 15. (sequence position no. 14 of 51): The priests address the craftsmen regarding the “striking” of the image and the sculpting continues.

Episode 16. (sequence position no. 15 of 51): The priests address the sculptor hewing the head from stone.

Episode 17. (sequence position no. 16 of 51): The priest proclaims that the sculpting is complete.

Episode 18. (sequence position no. 17 of 51): The *sem*-priest embraces the statue.

Episode 19. (sequence position no. 18 of 51): The priest removes his robe and dons a leopard skin, marking a major transition in the ritual. The construction of the statue is complete and it is ready to have its mouth opened.

Episode 20. (sequence position no. 19 of 51): The *sem*-priest puts on the robe and says, “I have seized this eye from its mouth. I have severed its foreleg (*nHm.n.i irt Tn m r.f fd.n.i xpS.f*).”

Episode 21. (sequence position no. 20 of 51): The lector priest speaks to the *sem*-priest as he changes clothes.

Episode 22. (sequence position no. 21 of 51): The priests and the statue move outside.

Episode 23, parts 2–3 and Episode 24, part 2. (sequence position no. 22 of 51): The priests slaughter a goat, a goose, and a bull and offer the goat’s head, the goose’s head, and the bull’s heart and foreleg to the statue, which is urged to eat its first meal. The priest addresses the statue directly: “Receive the foreleg, the eye of Horus; the heart is brought to you with it (*min.k xpx irt Hr in n.k Haty im.f*) . . . your goat is brought to you, its head is cut; the goose is brought to you, its head is cut (*in n.k art.k wDa tp.f in n.k smn r.k wDa tp.f*).”

329. Episode 11 is preserved in Otto’s Texts 2, 3, and 5 (*Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 60). The priest changes into the *knj bib*, a broad bib decorated with pearls which is tied across the shoulders with a bow. This change of clothes signifies a major transition in the ritual from the purification to the actual sculpting and animation of the statue.

330. “Striking” refers to the act of carving the stone.

331. In Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 63 lines a–d, the craftsmen are referred to by their specific tasks as “carver of the bones” (der Knochenschnitzer), “the one who works with an axe” (der Axtarbeiter), and “the worker with the polishing stone” (der Polierstein-Arbeiter) who “hits” (schlagen) and “touches” (anfassen) the statue.

Episode 25 with 23, part 1 and 24, part 1. (sequence position no. 23 of 51): This episode is entitled, "Rite of Opening the mouth and eyes at the offering of the sacrificed bull," in which the mouth and eyes are activated via contact with the bull's foreleg. The priest states, "I have pressed your mouth for you (*mDd.n.i n.k r.k*) . . . I have opened your mouth for you (*wp.n.i n.k r.k*) . . . the one who . . . (?) your mouth: I have balanced your mouth and bones for you (*Hng r.k mxA.n.i n.k r.k qsw.k*) . . . O, N! I have opened your mouth for you with the foreleg, eye of Horus (*HA N wp.n.i n.k r.k m xpx irt Hr*)." The bull's foreleg and heart are then placed on the ground in front of the statue.

Episode 27. (sequence position no. 24 of 51): The priest opens the statue's mouth and eyes with a curved instrument while he recites, "O, N! I have pressed your mouth to your bones for you (*hA N mDd.n.i n.k r.k r qsw.k*) . . . this N, Horus has opened your mouth for you, he opens your eyes for you (with) the double-god blade, with the Great-of-Power blade, with which the mouth of every god is opened (*N pn wp.n n.k Hr r.k wp.f n.k irt.y.k ntry m wr-HkAw wp r n nTr nb im*)."

Episode 26. (sequence position no. 25 of 51): The priest opens the statue's mouth and eyes with the "nua-blade" (*nwA*) and the "meskhetyu-blade of iron, which open the mouths of the gods (*msxtyw biA wp r n nTrw*)."

The text continues:

Horus is the opener of the mouth of N (*Hr wn r n N*) . . . Horus has opened the mouth of N (*wn.n Hr r n N*) . . . with the iron that came from Seth (*m biA pr m swty*), the *meskhetyu*-blade of iron (*msxtyw biA*) with which the mouths of the gods are opened (*wp r n nTrw im.f*), may you open the mouth of N with it so that he may walk and speak with his body before the great Nine Gods in the great mansion of the official that is in Iunu (*wp r nTrw im.f wp.k r N im.f Sm.f mdw.f Dt.f xr psDt aAt m Hwt sr wrt imt iwnw*), and so that he may take up your White Crown there before Horus lord of the nobility (*iT.f wrwt.k im xr Hr nb pat*)."³³²

Episode 28. (sequence position no. 26 of 51): The lector-priest presents the consecrated statue.

Episode 29. (sequence position no. 27 of 51): The *imy-khent* priest presents the completed statue.

Episode 30. (sequence position no. 28 of 51): The priests address the sculptors and carvers.

Episode 31. (sequence position no. 29 of 51): The priests bring the son of the deceased before the statue whom they address thus: "O, N! Your son

332. Otto's Text 4 adds to the end, "O, N! Horus hat dir deinen Mund geöffnet (*wpj*), er hat dir deine Augen geöffnet (*wn*) mit dem *dw3-wr*, dem *dwn-ꜥ*, mit dem die Münders aller ober ägyptischen Götter geöffnet sind" (O, N! Horus has opened your mouth (*wpj*), he has opened for you your eyes with the *dw3-wr*, the *dwn-ꜥ*, by means of which the mouths of all upper Egyptian gods are opened; *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 83).

whom you love is brought to you so that he may open your mouth (*N in n.k sA.k mry wp.f r.k*)."

Episode 32. (sequence position no. 30 of 51): The son opens the statue's mouth and eyes with the *medjedfet*-blade (*mDdft*) followed by the "finger of was-sceptre" (*Dbā n wAs*).³³³ He then proclaims, "O N, Horus has pressed your mouth for you, Horus has opened your mouth for you, and your eyes, so they are grounded (*N mDd.n n.k Hr r.k wp.n n.k Hr r.k m irty.k snt.sn*)."

Episode 33. (sequence position no. 31 of 51): The priest opens the statue's mouth with his little finger and recites, "O N! Your mouth is . . . (?), I measure for you to your bones. Horus has opened your mouth for you—how well-grounded is your mouth! (*hA N Hng r.k mxA.i n.k r qsw.k wp.n n.k Hr r.k snT-wy r.k*)."

(*Episodes 34 and 35.* are not attested in the Rekhmire sequence.)³³⁴

Episode 36. (sequence position no. 32 of 51): The priest opens the statue's mouth and eyes with the four *abet*-tools and states, "How well-grounded is your mouth! I strike it and your eyes, so that they are grounded N! I have opened your mouth for you, I have opened your eyes for you, with the four *abet*-tools (*snT-wy r.k sk.i.r.f m irty.k snt.sn N wp.n.i n.k r.k wp.n.i n.k irty.k m abt 4*)."

(*Episode 40.* is not attested in the Rekhmire sequence.)³³⁵

(*Episode 42.* is not attested in the Rekhmire sequence.)³³⁶

Episode 43. (sequence position no. 33 of 51): The priest sacrifices a bull, cuts off its foreleg, and removes its heart.

Episode 44. (sequence position no. 34 of 51): The priest places the bull's foreleg and heart on the ground in front of N.

Episode 45 (sequence position no. 35 of 51) repeats *Episode 25*.

Episode 46 (sequence position no. 36 of 51): The priests open the mouth and eyes of N with the *nua*-blade and the *meskhetyu*-blade of iron "with which the mouths of the gods are opened (*wp r n nTrw*)," while reciting, "Horus is the opener of the mouth of N (*Hr wn r N*)" and "May you open the mouth of N with it so that he may walk and speak with his body before

333. Otto's Text 2 adds, "Statue dieses N, mit Leben beschenkt" (Statue of N, being gifted with life; *ibid.*, 91 n. 6). Texts 5 and 6 add, "dass er dir deine Augen öffne (*wn*) (in order that he might open [*wn*] your eyes; *ibid.*, 91 n. 11). Otto translates the "finger of was-sceptre" as "Finger von Gold" ("finger of gold").

334. In Otto's Scene 34 line b, the priest grooms or brushes out the statue's mouth and eyes with the enigmatic *mms* or *nws* tool, "O, N! I brush out/groom for you your mouth! I open for you your eyes" (O, N! Ich fege dir deinen Mund aus! Ich öffne dir deine Augen!). In the following scene, the priest's address indicates that Horus has come to unify or unite the statue, but the meaning is unclear. See Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 95–96. Perhaps the idea is that the statue's body parts are reconstituted individually and then united into one body by Horus.

335. In Otto's reconstruction, Episode 40A corresponds to Episodes 20 and 21 and Episode 40 B repeats Episode 36. It is unclear why the scenes have been repeated (*ibid.*, 100).

336. The priest leads the son away (*ibid.*, 101–2).

the great Nine Gods in the great mansion of the official that is in Iunu and so that he may take up the White Crown there before Horus lord of the nobility (*wp.k r n N im.f Sm.fndw.f Dt.f xr psDt aAt m Hwt sr wrt imt iwnw iT.f wrt im xr Hr nb pat*)."

(Episode 48. is not attested in the Rekhmire sequence.)³³⁷

(Episode 49. is not attested in the Rekhmire sequence.)³³⁸

Episode 50. (sequence position 37 of 51): The tomb painting depicts the priest clothing the statue, but there is no accompanying text.³³⁹

(Episodes 50b–58. are not attested in the Rekhmire sequence.)³⁴⁰

337. As Otto's Scene 48 (ibid., 111), this episode has the priest brushing out and "opening" the statue's mouth and eyes, and then adorning it with the *nms* bandage, apparently a piece of white cloth which was wrapped around the body or perhaps a headscarf (ibid., 110–11). Based on the clothing of the body with the *nms* in Abydos, Otto concludes that this particular scene derives from the rituals for the clothing of a temple statue (ibid.).

338. In Otto's edition the priest clothes the statue with the royal *šj3 t* garment, "O, N! Take for yourself the *šj3 t*! Equip yourself with it! Take for yourself the Horus eye!" ("O, N! Nim dir das *šj3 t*! Rüste dich damit aus! Nimm dir das Horusauge!" ibid. 112 lines a–b). Text 4 adds, "Whereby your mouth and both of your eyes are opened" ("womit dein Mund und deine beiden Augen geöffnet werden"; ibid., 112 line c).

339. Otto presents the following: the priest clothes the statue with the "beautiful" and "excellent" *mnḥ.t* garment, a white apron which appears in lists of royal and divine garments in the Pyramid Texts (ibid., 112–14). He then implores the statue, "Receive for yourself this eye of Horus, the white one . . . so that you appear in it, so that in it you are excellent" ("Empfange dir dieses Auge des Horus, das Weisse"), and further, "Equip yourself with the Horus eye and the *ḏb3* dress of Renenutet; take for yourself the Horus eye of which the gods are afraid; the gods are afraid of you just as they are afraid of the eye of Horus" ("Versieh dich mit dem Horusauge, mit dem *ḏb3*-Kleid der Renenutet. Nimm dir das Horusauge, vor dem sich die Götter fürchten! Die Götter fürchten sich vor dir, wie sie sich vor dem Horusauge fürchten!").

340. Otto reports the following: in 50b the priest clothes the statue with the *mnḥ.t* garment and the *ssm t*, a pearl apron like the one worn by both Horus and Seth in the *wpt-r* (ibid., 114) and by kings and gods generally (ibid., 115). The statue is then given the green *mnḥ.t* garment which bestows youth on its bearer and makes him (the statue) look splendid (Episode 51 in ibid., 16). The priest then offers the red *ins* garment, a gift of a goddess which causes its wearer, whom she protects and strengthens, to grow and be excellent. According to Otto the garment symbolizes the fiery sun eye which bestows power and terror on its wearer and functions as a symbol of kingship and daily renewal (ibid., 118). This same garment is mentioned in PT 285c/d where it protects the wearer from Re's fire while allowing him to approach Re. In the following scene (Episode 53) the statue receives the divine *idmj* garment, perhaps a long coat spun by Isis and woven by Nephthys, who together "make the garment of N brilliant, and N triumphs against her enemies" ("Sie machen den Glanz des Gewandes der N und sie triumphiert gegen ihre Feinde," ibid., 119 line h). In Episode 54, the statue is then given the final article of clothing, the *wšḥ* broad collar, and is anointed with sweet-smelling salves and oils. According to Otto, this indicated a transfer of power, similar to the crowning ceremony of the king or his installation into royal office (ibid., 124). Otto's Text 33 indicates that the salve was also used to bind the bones and flesh together (ibid.). The priest then decorates the statue's eyes with green and black makeup (Episodes 55–56) and places on its head the *wrr.t* crown. He recites a text which begins, "O, N! Your mother gave birth to you on this day" ("O N! Geboren hat dich deine Mutter an diesem Tage" ibid., 124 line b; see also line k), and later

Episode 39. (sequence position 38 of 51): The priest offers the statue an ostrich plume.

Episode 37. (sequence position 39 of 51): The priest touches the statue's mouth with the *psš-kf* blade, making firm the divided jaws.³⁴¹

Episode 38. (sequence position 40 of 51): The priest feeds the statue with grapes.

Episode 41. (sequence position 41 of 51): The priest offers a bowl of water to the statue and recites, "Receive the eye of Horus; the water in it is purity for you (*min.k irt Hr iab n.k mw imy.s*)."

Episode 47. (sequence position 42 of 51): The priest censes the statue.³⁴²

Episode 59. (sequence position 43 of 51): There is no text accompanying the depiction of the priest censing the divine image.³⁴³

(*Episodes 60–64.* are not attested in the Rekhmire sequence.)³⁴⁴

refers to the knitting together of the image's members by Geb, father of Osiris (ibid., 124 lines e–f, o–q. See also p. 125, n. 5). In the following scenes the image is presented with his insignia: a braided whip, the *ḥmš* scepter, and the *ḥd* club (Episodes 57A–C in ibid., 127–29). The priest gives the statue the *mnw*, an unidentified object and recites, "Given to you is your mouth! Open for you is your mouth! How grounded is your mouth. Opened for you is your eye so that you see with them! Opened for you are both your ears so that you can hear with them!" ("Gegeben ist dir dein Mund! Geöffnet ist dir dein Mund. Wie gegründet ist dein Mund! Wie gegründet ist dein Mund! Geöffnet ist dir dein Auge, dass du mit ihnen (so!) siehst! Aufgetan werden dir deine beiden Ohren, dass du mit ihnen hörst! ibid., 129–30).

341. Otto's Texts 22 and 47 add, "I have opened for you your mouth by means of the *psš kf*, by which the mouth of each god and each goddess is being opened" ("Ich habe dir deinen Mund geöffnet mit dem *psš kf*, mit dem der Mund jedes Göttes und jeder Göttin geöffnet wird," ibid., 97).

342. In Otto's Episode 47 the priest recites, "Made permanent is N by means of the incense, which is pure, sweet-smelling, the odor of the god on your flesh" ("Dauerhaft gemacht wird N mit dem Weihrauch, dem reinen, dem süß duftenden. Der Wohlgeruch des Gottes an dein Fleisch!" ibid., 108 lines d–e).

343. In Otto the priest censes the statue again and says, "O, N! Take for yourself the eye of Horus. His scent comes to you" ("O N! Nimm dir das Horusauge! Sein Duft kommt zu dir!" ibid., 131 line b). In Episode 59D incense is offered to the uraeus which will be placed on a divine or royal carrier (ibid., 137). In the following scene, incense is offered to a comprehensive list of gods and goddesses who are then called upon to "Strengthen for him his heart within his body! Open for him his mouth! Open up his ears! Open the mouth of N! Open for him his nose!" ("Festigt ihm sein Herz in seinem Leib! Öffnet ihm seinen Mund! Tut ihm seine Ohren auf! Öffnet den Mund des N! Öffnet ihm seine Nase!").

344. In Otto's Episode 60, the priest censes the statue and recites, "O, N! I have opened for you your mouth. I have added for you your mouth onto your bones. Re has opened your mouth for you, he has opened for you both of your eyes. Open is the mouth of N. His heart is satisfied eternally in his body" ("O N! Ich habe dir geöffnet deinen Mund. Ich habe dir deinen Mund an deine Knochen angefügt. Re hat dir deinen Mund geöffnet, er hat dir deine beiden Augen aufgetan. Geöffnet worden ist der Mund des N; zufrieden ist sein Herz in seinem Leibe ewiglich" ibid., 138 lines b–e). Episode 61 repeats the censing in Episode 47. In Episode 62, attested only in Otto's Texts 4 and 7, tribute is paid to the statue with the *nmš.t jar*. The priest declares, "O, N! Take for yourself your head. Bring together your bones as a whole. Let your bodily parts become firm" ("O N! Nimm dir deinen Kopf! Vereinige

Episode 65. (sequence position no. 44 of 51): The priests purify the offering table with water and incense and then place on it a generous supply of bread, beer, cool water, and choice cuts of meat on it for the statue's nourishment.

(*Episodes 66–68.* are not attested in the Rekhmire sequence.)³⁴⁵

Episode 69. (sequence position no. 45 of 51): The lector-priests perform “many transfigurations (*irt sAxw aSa in Xryw-Hbt*)” on the statue.³⁴⁶

(*Episode 70.* is not attested in the Rekhmire sequence.)³⁴⁷

dir deine Knochen! Lass dir fest werden deine Glieder!”), “N! Take for yourself the Horus eye so that you will be cleansed and made divine” (“N! Nimm dir das Horusauge, dass du gereinigt und vergöttlicht werdest”), and “Hail to you, N, on the seat of the throne! Hail to you, N in Heaven, on the earth” (“Heil dir, N, auf dem Thronszitz! Heil dir, N, im Himmel, auf Erden” *ibid.*, 139 lines b, g, m, and n; see also lines m–p). This act of “paying tribute” with the *nms. t jar* is well known from the rituals performed in the New Kingdom temple cult and is, Otto presumes, original to that setting (*ibid.*, 141, 142). In the following episode the statue “grasps the *wrr.t* crown” (“N ergreift die *wrr.t*-Krone”) from the gods and is then nurtured by Isis and nursed by Nephthys (*ibid.*, 143 lines d–e). Being suckled by Isis and Nephthys is frequently mentioned in royal accession texts. See J. Leclant, “Le rôle de l’allaitement dans le cérémonial pharaonique du couronnement,” in *Proceedings of the IXth International Congress of the History of Religions: Tokyo and Kyoto, 27.8–9.9.1958* (Tokyo: Maruzen, 1960), 135–45. He is cleansed with libations in episodes 63 and 63A. The purpose of the cleansing is stated before the statue, “so that you may live again and be made younger like Re Chepre” (“so dass du wieder lebst und verjüngt bist wie Re-Chepre,” Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 144). “Episode 64, another scene in which incense is offered to the statue, contains explicit birthing imagery.” The statue “ascends on the thighs of Isis” (“N steigt hinauf auf den Schenkeln der Isis”) and “climbers up the thighs of Nephthys” (“N klimmt hinauf auf den Schenkeln der Nephthys,” *ibid.*, 145 line k). Atum, the father of the statue, then grasps the newborn, presumably as it exits the womb, and gives it to a mother-goddess, who nurses it: “Mother of N, ‘Ipj, give that N your breast, so that he might put it up to his mouth, and N might suck your white, light, sweet milk” (“Mutter des N, ‘Ipj, gib jenem N diese deine Brust, damit er sie sich über seinen Mund führe und damit N jene deine weisse, lichte, susse Milch sauge!” *ibid.*, 145 lines n–p).

345. Episode 66 is a short scene in which the priest censes the statue, extant only in Otto’s Texts 4 and 15. In Episode 67, the priest purifies the offering made in Episode 65, and in Episode 68, extant only in Otto’s texts 4 and 7 and in the ritual for Amenophis I, he consecrates the animals. See *ibid.*, 151–52.

346. Otto divides this episode into three sections: Episode 69A; Episode 69B, in which a libation is poured out before N to cleanse him; and Episode 69C, in which the offering is pronounced ready for consumption. The statue is then urged to consume it “O, N! Take for yourself the Horus eye!” (“O N! Nimm dir das Horusauge!” *ibid.*, 155 line b).

347. In Otto’s reconstruction this episode consists of three scenes. In Episodes 70A–B, the priest invites the statue to partake of the bread and beer. Episode 70B ends with the words, “O, N! Your mouth is being opened; your ears are being opened! You are seeing with your eye and speaking with your mouth. . . . N! You are entering towards this bread, this beer, towards this your flesh . . . you should never feel hungry!” (“O N! Dein Mund ist dir geöffnet, deine Ohren sind dir aufgetan! Du siehst mit deinem Auge und du sprichst mit deinem Mund. . . . N! Du trittst ein zu diesen Broten, du trittst ein zu diesem Bier, zu diesem deinem Fleisch . . . Du sollst niemals hungern!” *ibid.*, 157). The goal of the ritual has been achieved. Otto comments, “The dead one now possesses the bodily abilities and the divine-like qualities necessary to receive and enjoy the offering and so an eternal

Episode 73. (sequence position no. 46 of 51): The statue is transported to its shrine on a small platform carried by several priests.

Episode 74, part C. (sequence position no. 47 of 51): The statue is installed in its shrine.

Episode 74, parts A and B. (sequence position no. 48 of 51): The priests open the shrine doors and adorn the statue with a garland.

Episode 75. (sequence position no. 49 of 51): The statue is declared to be complete.³⁴⁸

Episode 71. (sequence position no. 50 of 51): The priests offer incense to Ra, the sun-god.³⁴⁹

Episode 72. (sequence position no. 51 of 51): The priest makes offerings and declares that the Opening of the Mouth is complete.³⁵⁰

life" ("Der Tote besitzt nun die körperlichen Fähigkeiten und gottgleichen Qualitäten zum Empfang und Genuss der Opfer und damit zu einem unvergänglichen Leben," *ibid.*). In Episode 70C, the priest erases his footprints.

348. Otto's Texts 6 and 7 add, "Exalted is the beauty of this god, shining in each cleansing" ("Erhaben ist die Schönheit dieses Gottes, erstahlend in jeder Reinigung," *ibid.*, 171).

349. On behalf of Ra the priest recites, "I have given air to those who are in secret; I have allowed to breathe those who are in the underworld. I have created gods, everyone according to its own form. I have seen to it that they rest in their chapels and the offerings that belong to them are enduring" ("Ich habe Luft gegeben denen, die im Geheimen sind, und habe atmen lassen die, die in der Unterwelt sind. Ich habe die Götter gebildet, einen jeden nach seiner Gestalt. Ich habe gemacht, dass sie in ihren Kapellen ruhen und die zugehörigen Opfer dauern"). "I have also crafted N. I have created his divine form. . . . His mouth is opened" ("Ich habe [auch] N gebildet. Ich habe seine göttliche Form geschaffen. . . . Sein Mund ist geöffnet"; *ibid.*, 159 lines z-bb, dd-ff).

350. Several versions of the ritual include final sayings, including: "O, N! Opened is your mouth, opened your mouth by Ptah, opened is your mouth by Sokar, by means of that chisel made from ore by which also the mouth of the gods is opened. You are speaking in front of the god Pe . . . O, N! I open your mouth, I am Ptah. I open your mouth for you . . . I give you your arms, I am Thoth. Receive the water! Opened is your mouth by which your son brings to you the fresh water. Geb it is who opens your mouth. Your heart belongs to you . . . you blend in among the gods of heaven. You cannot be distinguished from any of them" ("O, N! Aufgetan ist dein Mund! Geöffnet ist dein Mund durch Ptah, geöffnet ist dein Mund durch Sokar mit jenem Meissel aus Erz, mit dem der Mund der Götter geöffnet wird. Du sprichst vor den Göttern von Pe . . . O N! Ich öffne deinen Mund; ich bin Ptah. Ich tue dir deinen Mund auf . . . Ich gebe dir deine Arme; ich bin Thot. Empfange das Wasser! Geöffnet wird dein Mund durch das, was dein Sohn dir bringt, das frische Wasser. Geb ist es, der deinen Mund öffnet. Dein Herz gehört dir . . . Du mischst dich unter die Götter des Himmels. Nicht kannst du unterschieden werden von irgendeinem von ihnen," *ibid.*, 162–63 lines b–h, i). The statue is then carried to its shrine and installed (Otto's Episodes 73 and 74AB; See also Rekhmire sequence positions 46 and 47). The priest proclaims, "The god is resting in his palace . . . Your beauty belongs to you, N! You are being given life by your father Osiris . . . you are resting . . . you are vivified at the vanguard of the gods" ("Der Gott ruht in seinem Palaste . . . Deine Schönheit gehört dir N! . . . Dir wird Leben gegeben bei deinem Vater Osiris . . . Du ruhst . . . Du bist belebt an der Spitze der Götter," *ibid.*, 168 lines c, d, e, f, g). Texts 6 and 7 add the following concluding words, "The statue is completed . . . exalted is the beauty of this god, beaming in each cleansing

3.4.6. Outline of the Egyptian

Opening of the Mouth Ritual from the Tomb of Rekhmire

- I. Introduction/Title: Performing the opening of the mouth on the statue in the temple workshop
- II. Priests view the statue in the tomb chapel (Episode 8)
- III. Tomb Chapel: Purification (Episodes 1–7)
 - A. Cleansing with water (and reconstitution of the body?)
 - B. Purifying with natron (and animation of tongue?)
 - C. Second purification with natron (statue as newborn)
 - D. Censing of statue (established with brother gods, animation of nose), purification complete
- IV. Temple workshop (Episodes 9–18)
 - A. outline of statue divinely revealed to *sem* priest
 - B. *sem* priest asks sculptors to make the statue
 - C. sculptors hew the statue
 - D. statue complete
 - E. *sem* priest embraces statue
- V. Transition: Priest Changes Clothes, Priest and Statue leave temple workshop and go outside (Episode 19–21)
- VI. Opening of the Mouth (Episodes 22–69)
 - A. opening of the mouth and eyes with sacrificed animals
 - B. opening of the mouth and eyes with a curved blade
 - C. opening of the mouth and eyes with iron blades (activation of limbs)
 - D. statue presented and declared complete
 - E. opening of the mouth and eyes by the son using a blade and a finger
 - F. opening of the mouth by priest with little finger
 - G. opening of the mouth by priest using the four *abet*-tools
 - H. offering of bull foreleg and heart to the statue
 - I. opening of the mouth by priest using iron blades
- VII. Clothing and adorning the statue
- VIII. Feeding the image
 - A. Priest makes the statue's jaws firm with the *pšš-kf* blade
 - B. Statue given fruit and water
 - C. Priest censes the statue
 - D. Feeding of the statue
- IX. Priest performs many transfigurations on the statue
- X. Installation of statue
 - A. Statue transported to its shrine
 - B. Statue installed in its shrine
 - C. Statue adorned with garland
 - D. Statue declared complete
 - E. Incense offered to Ra
 - F. Opening of the Mouth ritual complete

The version of the *wpt-r* preserved in the tomb of Rekhmire begins with the purification of the statue in the tomb chapel (Episodes 8 and 1–7, which are sequence positions no. 1–8), prior to its creation in the temple workshop

as carried out according to the ritual" ("Die Statue ist vollendet . . . erhaben ist die Schönheit dieses Gottes, erstrahlend in jeder Reinigung, wie es nach dem Ritual ist," *ibid.*, 171).

(Episodes 9–18). Because the events are not presented in chronological order, Otto suggested that the cleansing scenes in Episodes 2–7 were not part of the *wpt-r* proper but were generic rituals of purification borrowed from other cleansing rituals.³⁵¹ However, this does not explain their current sequence. Why would the ritual begin with the viewing and purification of a statue which had not yet been created? Episodes 9–18 are also somewhat puzzling. Although the accompanying texts describe the physical creation of the image of Rekhmire from stone, each scene depicts a completed statue rather than the manufacturing process itself. Undoubtedly, the limits of space would have required abbreviated representations of the ritual acts, but this would not have precluded depicting at least one or two episodes of the manufacturing process. Perhaps the final product was depicted, even during the manufacturing scenes, as a means of bringing about its completion. Rather than employing performative language, as seems to have been done in the *mīs pī pīt pī* when the statue was addressed as *ilu* prior to its mouth being washed, this may be an example of “performative representation.”³⁵² This would also explain why the ritual as it is recorded in Rekhmire’s tomb begins with the purification of the completed statue. The artist was not concerned to present the events in chronological order. Rather, by beginning the written and visual records of the *wpt-r* with a completed image of Rekhmire, the very sequence itself declares the success of the ritual acts: that this image will be transformed into a manifestation of its referent is a foregone conclusion. Thus, contra Otto, the purification scenes (Episodes 2 – 7) may have been original to the *wpt-r*. The remaining episodes appear in chronological order: creation, opening of the mouth and eyes, clothing, feeding, and installation.

3.4.7. Interpretation of the *wpt-r*: Birth and Manufacture

I agree with the consensus of Egyptologists that the *wpt-r* was a ritual chiefly concerned with the creation and animation of a divine image, or, in a funerary context, the re-creation of the mummy of the deceased, by which the image or the mummy was made fit for cultic use. Beyond this, however, Roth has offered the most compelling interpretation of the evidence, suggesting that, like the *mīs pī pīt pī*, the *wpt-r* was, at least in part, a ceremony of (re)birth.

Roth argues that the set of instruments frequently found in temple inventories and Old Kingdom tombs and known as the *psš-kf* set, which included the *psš-kf* knife,³⁵³ four straight-sided flared cups, two narrow-

351. Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 34.

352. On performative language see p. 70 n. 160, above.

353. The term *psš-kf* refers to “dividing into two or more pieces.” See *WB* 1:553, 6–10. The *psš-kf* knife is a flint instrument used to open the mouth of the deceased. See *WB* 1:555, 2.

necked bottles, and often a pair of narrow rectangular flint blades, served both a practical and a ritual use in childbirth, and hence in the ritual rebirth of the deceased.³⁵⁴ In the Pyramid Texts,³⁵⁵ the knife and blades are offered after the spells concerning the king's passage through the birth canal but before he begins to nurse.³⁵⁶ This implies that they would have been used shortly after the birth, and that the knife, with its sharp edge, would likely have been used to cut the umbilical cord.³⁵⁷ Although the Pyramid Texts specify that the function of the *pšš-kf* knife was to "fix the jaw," Roth claims that this is not a reference to embalming, contra van Walsem,³⁵⁸ but rather to the strengthening of the baby's jaw for nursing.³⁵⁹ She concludes, "The fact that breasts are offered to the deceased soon after the *pšš-kf* spell in the Pyramid Texts sequence supports the assumption that it is this slackness that the *pšš-kf* knife is intended to prevent."³⁶⁰ It may also have been used to cut the umbilical cord, thus separating or dividing the child from its mother.³⁶¹

A further connection between the *pšš-kf* knife and birth is found on the crown of the goddess Meskhenet, the patroness of childbirth, as shown in the divine birth scenes of Hatshepsut in Deir el-Bahri.³⁶² Although Gardiner, followed by Frankfort, has suggested that the symbol on her crown is

354. A. M. Roth, "The *pšš-kf* and the 'Opening of the Mouth' Ceremony: A Ritual of Birth and Rebirth," *JEA* 78 (1992) 114, 116.

355. The references to the Pyramid Texts (PT) here and in the following pages are relevant to our understanding of the Opening of the Mouth because they include actual rituals from the *wpt-r* itself.

356. Roth, "The *pšš-kf*," 123.

357. Ibid., 123. See also T. Hikade, "Getting the Ritual Right: Fishtail Knives in Predynastic Egypt," in *Egypt: Temple of the Whole World: Studies in Honor of Jan Assmann* (ed. S. Meyer; Leiden: Brill, 2003) 137–51. Hikade concludes that in predynastic Egypt, fishtail knives were used exclusively by men and were placed in their tombs as symbols of power and honor ("Getting the Ritual Right," 150). That is, they would not have been used by Egyptian midwives, as Roth claims, and were unrelated to birth and rebirth. Hikade's explanation of the function of 4th-millennium fishtail knives may be correct, but he does not allow for the possibility that the fishtail knives had multiple uses in later periods. If these tools are unrelated to birth, then why, in the Pyramid Texts, are they offered after the king's passage through the birth canal but before he begins to nurse? Given the context in which the *pšš-kf* knife appears in the PT and the multiple allusions to birth, Roth's interpretation is certainly plausible.

358. R. van Walsem claims that the *pšš-kf* knife and the associated instruments were models of an embalming kit (R. van Walsem, "The *Pss-kf*: An Investigation of an Ancient Egyptian Funerary Instrument." *OMROL* 59 [1978]: 193–249).

359. Roth, "The *Pšš-kf*," 124.

360. Ibid.

361. Ibid.

362. Ibid., 144; E. Naville, *The XIth Dynasty Temple at Deir el-Bahari*, II (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1910) pl. 51. Note also that in ancient Egypt the birthing bricks were personified as the goddess Meskhenet. See Roth, "The *pšš-kf*," 145; idem, "Opening of the Mouth."

a bovine uterus, Roth notes that the emblem strongly resembles the *pšš-kf* knife.³⁶³

Roth also observes that the overall progression of the Opening of the Mouth reflects the various stages of growth from birth through childhood. The PT spells dealing with purification and bodily efflux that van Walsem claimed were part of mummification could easily be associated with birth. Further, in PT 26–27d the mouth of Unas is compared to that of a newborn calf on the day of its birth.³⁶⁴ His limbs are then cleansed (PT 28, 29c), suggesting the washing of the afterbirth from a newborn. After his jaw was “made firm” (Sp 30³⁶⁵), Unas’s mouth was opened with two blades (Sp 30b) while the priest recited, “Osiris Unas, I have split open for you your mouth.” Based on the use of the little finger of Horus to open the mouth in PT 1329–30³⁶⁶ in the pyramids of Pepi II and Queen Neith, Roth interpreted the two blades as the two little fingers of the midwife used to clear mucus from a newborn’s mouth, enabling it to breathe.³⁶⁷ It is noteworthy that the goddesses Isis and Nephthys wash the mouth of the dead with their fingers of *bjʒ*,³⁶⁸ the same materials used to make the blades with which the mouth of Unas is opened in the PT. Roth notes that it is these particular goddesses, in the role of divine midwives, who cleanse the royal newborns in the Middle Kingdom (or Second Intermediate Period) Egyptian tale, “The Birth of the Royal Children,”³⁶⁹ in which both children are described in the likeness of statues, born with limbs of gold and a crown of lapis lazuli.³⁷⁰

In the New Kingdom *wpt-r*, two different sets of little fingers are used to open the mouth: the paired fingers of the priests and a single golden finger (*dʿm*).³⁷¹ The statue is then given two vessels representing divine breasts, one of which contained milk, and is urged, “Take the tip of the bodily breast of Horus, take it into thy mouth!” (Sp 32)³⁷² and “Take the full(?) breast of thy sister Isis, bring it unto thy mouth!”³⁷³ Shortly thereafter, the

363. A. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar: Being an Introduction to the Study of Hieroglyphs* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1927) 457. H. Frankfort, “A Note on the Lady of Birth,” *JNES* 3 (1944) 198–200. Roth, “The *pšš-kf*,” 145.

364. See Episode 5, p. 95 above.

365. Piankoff, *The Shrines*, 78, Spell 30.

366. “By the little finger of Horus, with which he split open the mouth of his father, with which he split open the mouth of Osiris.” A. M. Roth, “Fingers, Stars, and the ‘Opening of the Mouth’: The Nature and Function of the *ntrwj*-Blades,” *JEA* 79 (1993) 64.

367. Roth, “Fingers,” 63.

368. *Ibid.*, 66.

369. *Ibid.*, 66. For the transliteration, translation, and commentary on this text, see D. Bagnato, *The Westcar Papyrus: A Transliteration, Translation and Language Analysis* (Vienna: Edition Atelier, 2006) 77–103.

370. Bagnato, *The Westcar Papyrus*, 79, 82.

371. See Episodes 14 and 32 in Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 65–66, 91–93; and Roth, “Fingers,” 66, 69, fig. 8.

372. Piankoff, *The Shrines*, 798.

373. *Ibid.*, 78. See also p. 79, spells 22, 23, and 33.

statue is offered a soft *wedjat* cake (Sp 34)³⁷⁴ followed by five cloves of garlic, said to be teeth (PT 35).³⁷⁵ Roth interprets this in light of the weaning and teething of the child, who, prior to the appearance of its teeth, is given a cake comparable to *zwieback* to chew.³⁷⁶ After consuming a second cake (PT 35bc) and wine (PT 35),³⁷⁷ the statue is then given a full meal of bread, meat, wine, and beer (Sp 37–40).³⁷⁸ Roth comments:

The dead person had to be reborn to participate in the afterlife and this sequence suggests that, like other newborns, he could not at first eat adult food. In view of the extreme importance of food in Egyptian mortuary religion, an efficient ritual was needed for “bringing up baby.” The initial sequence of spells in the offering ritual of the Pyramid Texts performed this function, taking the deceased through his (re)birth and the developments necessary to allow him to enjoy his funerary banquet. Passing quickly through the transitions of birth and childhood, the ritual focuses primarily on the developments that will allow him to eat. Thus, the firmness of the jaw that allows the child to nurse and the teething process that allows him to eat solid foods are emphasized, while other developments, such as walking and talking, are not mentioned. Some parts of the sequence may be based on actual rituals of birth and childhood transitions, while others are probably purely mortuary; however, the underlying metaphorical unity and purpose of the sequence is clear.³⁷⁹

In addition to the data Roth has cited, her theory is strengthened by several allusions to birth in later texts of the *wpt-r*. In Otto’s Text 1, the statue is described as one who nurses at the breasts of its mother, Isis,³⁸⁰ while Edfou III mentions the delivery of the statue “on the thighs of his mother Isis on the day on which his mother bore him (auf den Schenkeln seiner Mutter Isis, an jenem Tage, (an) dem seine Mutter es gebar).”³⁸¹ This is also mentioned in Episode 64, in which the statue “ascends on the thighs of Isis (N steigt hinauf auf den Schenkeln der Isis)” and “climbs up the thighs of Neththys (N klimmt hinauf auf den Schenkeln der Nephthys).”³⁸² In Episode 55, the priest recites an incantation entitled, “O, N! Your mother has born you on this day (O N! Geboren hat dich deine Mutter an diesem Tage)”³⁸³ and later refers to the knitting together of the image’s members by

374. Ibid., 79.

375. Ibid.

376. Roth, “The *pšš-kf*,” 121.

377. The wine may have been given to numb the gums. See *ibid.*, 121.

378. A. Piankoff, *The Pyramid Texts of Unas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968) 80–81.

379. Roth, “The *pšš-kf*,” 121.

380. Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 48 line 11.

381. Edfou III in *ibid.*, 48.

382. *Ibid.*, 145 line k.

383. *Ibid.*, 124 lines b, k.

Geb, the father of Osiris.³⁸⁴ The image is also nurtured by Isis and nursed by Nephthys.³⁸⁵ Regardless of how one interprets the function of the *pšš-kf* set, the overall order of events and the explicit references to birth and nursing strongly suggest that through the Opening of the Mouth the newly created statue of the deceased or his/her mummy was thought to be reborn.

Birth was not, however, the only means by which the divine image came into existence. As in the *mīs pī pīt pī*, the Egyptian *wpt-r* texts do not suppress the fact that the object is manufactured by craftsmen from raw materials. This process is the subject of Episodes 9–17. Guided by a net or grid of squares designed to “capture” the likeness of the deceased, the artisans sculpt the image’s form from a block of stone.³⁸⁶ However, the fluidity between the image’s “birth” and the *realia* of its manufacture is evident even in this portion of the ritual, where one of the craftsmen is identified in the text as “der Knochenschnitzer,” “the carver of the bones.”³⁸⁷

This combined imagery is not unique to the *wpt-r*. From the Middle Kingdom on, the flesh of Egyptian gods and goddesses was said to be made of gold, their bones were silver, and on their heads grew locks of lapis lazuli.³⁸⁸ In the Instructions of Merikare an unnamed deity is “made of precious stones and born of bronze (*iri.w m ‘3.t mši.w m xm.ti’*).”³⁸⁹ This recalls the description of the Assyrian king Tukulti-Ninurta I in his epic as having been “successfully cast into/poured (*ši-pi-ik-šu*) through the channel (*ra-a-at*) of the womb of the gods.”³⁹⁰ In both examples, the analogy of human

384. Ibid., 124 lines e–f, o–q. See also p. 125 n 5.

385. Scene 63 in ibid., 143 line e; 145 lines n–p.

386. This grid was applied to the block of stone from which the statue would be carved and to the tomb walls in preparation for painting or carving. See Fischer-Elfert, *Die Vision von der Statue*, 17–21.

387. My emphasis. Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 63 line a. This same fluidity is demonstrated in other Egyptian texts which describe divine statues as having bones of silver, flesh of gold, and hair of lapis lazuli. See Gay Robins, “Cult Statues in Ancient Egypt,” in *Cult Image and Divine Representation in the Ancient Near East* (ed. N. H. Walls; Boston, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2005) 6. See also the “Instruction for Merikare,” which refers to the divine statue as “made of precious stones and born (*msi*) of bronze.” See the hieroglyphic text in W. Helck, *Die Lehre für König Merikare* (Weisbaden: Harrassowitz, 1977) 77–78, translated in J. Assmann, *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt* (trans. David Lorton; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 44–45, esp. p. 47. For a transliteration and German translation see J. F. Quack, *Studien zur Lehre für Merikare* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992).

388. In “The Destruction of humankind” in Ch. Maystre, “Le livre de la vache du ciel,” *BIFAO* 40 (1941) 53–115. For the complete text, see pp. 58–73. For English translations, see Piankoff, *The Shrines*, 27–29; and M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, vol. 2: *The New Kingdom* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1976) 197–99. For additional references to the material from which divine bodies were made, see K. Goebis, *Crowns in Egyptian Funerary Literature: Royalty, Rebirth, and Destruction*. Oxford: Griffiths Institute, 2008) 103 n. 243.

389. Text and transliteration from Quack, *Studien zur Lehre*, 74 line 10.

390. Machinist, “Literature as Politics,” 462.

birth has been combined with the manufacturing process to explain how a living manifestation of the divine comes into being: it is manufactured from rare and costly raw materials, but it is also born by the gods. Unlike the *mīs pî*, however, the *wpt-r* nowhere repudiates the role of the *human* craftsmen. Apparently the Egyptians had no difficulty with the idea that a human artisan could contribute to the creation of a divine image.

3.4.8. Conclusion

Through the reanimation of their sensory organs, the royal deceased of ancient Egypt were revived through their cultic images so that they could live eternally in the hereafter. This ritual procedure, known as the Opening of the Mouth (*wpt-r*), was applied to mummies, sarcophagi, and statues of the dead. In the latter two cases, the images were constructed by human craftsmen from stone and/or wood and adorned with precious materials and/or painted details. However, like its Mesopotamian counterpart, the *wpt-r* indicates that the divine image was also “reborn.” This notion is communicated not only by the verb used to describe the image’s creation, *msi’*, “to give birth, bear,” but by the equipment used for the opening of the mouth (the *pšš-kf* set, particularly the *pšš-kf* knife), the overall progression of events in the ritual from birth through childhood, and through a series of explicit references in the *wpt-r* itself to birth and newborn care. Thus, as with Mesopotamian divine statues, Egyptian images of the deceased were “born” or “reborn” through ritual means but they were also constructed from raw materials. The end product was not simply a physical representation. Rather, it was considered to be a living manifestation of the deceased that was now able to consume the sustenance necessary in the afterlife.

3.5. Comparison of the Nineveh and Babylon Versions of the *mīs pî pīt pî* and the Egyptian *wpt-r* from the Tomb of Rekhmire

<i>mīs pî pīt pî</i> (Nineveh)	<i>mīs pî pīt pî</i> (Babylon)	<i>wpt-r</i>
Purification of Image		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleansing with water • Purifying with natron • Second purification with natron (statue as newborn) • Censing of statue (established with brother gods, animation of nose), purification complete

<i>mīs pî pî pî pî</i> (Nineveh)	<i>mīs pî pî pî pî</i> (Babylon)	<i>wpt-r</i>
Preparations in the City, Countryside, Garden and Temple		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • marker set up for later placement of statue toward sunrise • reed huts for deities constructed at riverbank • water drawn for 7 basins set up on riverbank • fills holy-water basin of mouth-washing in temple of Kusu 		
Temple Workshop		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cleansed and purified workshop • offerings made • image addressed as <i>ilu</i>, receives first offering • mouth-washing and mouth-opening performed • image purified • incantation: "In heaven by your own power you emerge" • image addressed: "From today you go before Ea, your father" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two holy-water vessels set up • offerings made • mouth-washing • incantation: "Born in heaven by your own power" • image addressed: "From today you go before Ea, your father" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outline of statue divinely revealed to priest • priest asks sculptors to make the statue • sculptors hew the statue
Transition from Inside to Outside (Procession from <i>bīt mummi</i> to River)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • craftsmen escort statue from <i>bīt mummi</i> to riverbank in the <i>ṣēru</i> • priest proclaims purity and supernatural quality of wood • craft deities form the image 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • craftsmen escort statue from <i>bīt mummi</i> to riverbank, no <i>ṣēru</i> • priest proclaims purity and supernatural quality of wood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priest changes clothes • priest and statue leave workshop and go outside

<i>mīs pî pî pî pî</i> (Nineveh)	<i>mīs pî pî pî pî</i> (Babylon)	<i>wpt-r</i>
At the Riverbank		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ea and Asalluḫi and new image seated in orchard and fed • craftsmen return tools to Ea via river • mouth-washing performed, incantation: "He who comes, his mouth is washed . . . with his brothers let him be counted" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ea and Asalluḫi and new image seated in orchard and fed, new image faces sunset • craftsmen return tools to Ea via river • mouth-washing performed, incantation: "He who comes, his mouth is washed" 	
Procession from River to Garden		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • image escorted into garden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -image escorted into garden 	
In the Garden (Day One)		Opening of the Mouth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • image seated on mat amidst reed huts and standards • sets eyes toward sunrise • craftsmen's equipment laid down • offerings made 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • image seated on mat amidst reed huts and standards • sets eyes toward sunrise • offerings made • priest draws water for 7 holy water basins and puts them in Kusu temple • priest prepares holy water basin of mouth-washing • priest fills tamarisk trough and places it on brick of • <i>Dingir-maḫ</i> • mouth-washing performed • additional offerings made to various deities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opening of mouth and eyes with sacrificed animals, a curved blade, iron blades • statue presented and declared complete

<i>mīs pî pî pî pî</i> (Nineveh)	<i>mīs pî pî pî pî</i> (Babylon)	<i>wpt-r</i>
In the Garden (Day Two)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set up 3 thrones, 3 tables for Ea, Shamash, and <i>Asalluḫi</i> • make offerings • craftsmen deities mentioned • priest recites incantations: “Born in heaven by his own power “and incantations to Shamash, Ea, and <i>Asalluḫi</i> • offerings made to craft deities • priest performs mouth-washing and mouth-opening • offerings presented • incantation: “On the day when the god was created” • priest performs mouth-washing and mouth-opening • priest whispers into god’s ears, god exhorted to approach its temple • human craftsmen denounce contribution • series of incantations recited, including “Statue born in a pure place” and “Statue born in heaven” • statue given clothes, crown, and throne • offerings dismantled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set up 3 thrones, 3 tables for Ea, Shamash, and <i>Asalluḫi</i> • make offerings • priest recites incantations: “Born in heaven by his own power “and incantations to Shamash, Ea, and <i>Asalluḫi</i> • priest performs mouth-washing • incantation: “On the day when the god was created” • priest performs mouth-washing • human craftsmen denounce contribution • priest opens the god’s eye • series of incantations recited, including “Statue born in a pure place” and “Statue born in heaven” • statue given clothes, crown, and throne • offerings dismantled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opening of the mouth and eyes with blade and finger, little finger, four <i>abet</i> tools • offering of bull foreleg and heart to the statue • opening of mouth by priest using iron • blades
Procession from Orchard to Temple Gate		
• Rest of Nineveh Vrs Lost	• statue escorted to its temple	

<i>mīs pī pīt pī</i> (Nineveh)	<i>mīs pī pīt pī</i> (Babylon)	<i>wpt-r</i>
At the Temple Gate		
	• priest makes offering	• priest performs many transfigurations
Procession from Temple Gate to Holy of Holies		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statue seated and fed • offerings made to Ea and <i>Asalluḫi</i> • priest performs mouth-washing • statue purified • additional garments or insignia given 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clothing and adorning of statue • statue fed • statue transported to garden shrine and installed
To the Quay		
	• purification rituals performed	

As noted previously, the Nineveh and Babylon versions of the Washing of the Mouth and the Opening of the Mouth differ at the start. In the Nineveh version, the priest prepares the materials ahead of time, while in the Babylon version he does so only when those materials are needed. The Egyptian *wpt-r*, however, begins with the purification of the completed statue. As I suggested above, this may represent the anticipated goal of the mouth-opening: a completed image. In both, the Nineveh version and the *wpt-r*, the creation of the image in the temple workshop follows the initial opening scene, and it is here that the Babylon version begins. In each of the three versions, there is, then, a transition from inside (in the temple workshop) to outside (to the sacred garden of Ea in the *mīs pī pīt pī*, and the tomb entrance and/or the tomb chapel itself in the *wpt-r*). It is during this stage, both in the *pīt pī* (Babylon lines 12–16) and in the *wpt-r* (Episodes 22–69), that the image is ceremoniously born and fully animated. It is then clothed,³⁹¹ fed, and installed in its temple or tomb shrine.

There are, of course, many obvious differences among the rituals, especially between the Mesopotamian and Egyptian versions of the opening of the mouth, chief among them being that nearly all of the extant evidence for the *wpt-r* is from mortuary contexts. What I would like to highlight, however, is that not only do they share the title of the primary ritual action (*pīt pī* and *wpt-r*), but there is an overall consistency in the order of events: the creation of the image in a temple workshop; the transition from

391. Clothing is not mentioned in the Rekhmire text but it is represented in the accompanying tomb painting for Episode 50. Other *wpt-r* texts assign the clothing of the image to Episodes 48–58 (see pp. 98–100, above).

inside (workshop) to outside (garden, entrance to tomb) where the image is ceremoniously born, animated, and clothed; and the subsequent transition from outside (garden, tomb entrance) to inside (temple, tomb shrine), where the image is fed and installed. Further, as discussed above, both the *mīs pī pīt pī* and the *wpt-r* present the ritual creation of a divine image as a dual process of birth and manufacture. They also share an emphasis on the opening of the eye and on the establishment of the image within the divine family. The latter is demonstrated in Mesopotamian version of the ritual at the riverbank prior to the image's entry into the garden. The priest proclaims, "with his (the image's) brothers let him be counted" (*itti aḥḥēšu limmannu*). Similarly, before leaving the temple workshop, the Egyptian priest addresses the statue, "You are . . . established between your brothers, the gods" (*Dd.ti imwyt snw.k nTrw*; Episode 7).

The parallels in the above list could be explained typologically. We expect that the divine image would be created in the temple workshop. The combination of manufacture and birthing imagery may be attributed to common human experience: artisans construct divine statues but living beings are born. The injunction to "open the mouth" could be explained by the universal practice of cleansing a newborn's mouth.³⁹² Nor is the animation of the eye unique to the *pīt pī* and the *wpt-r*, as attested by modern Buddhist and Hindu rituals for the animation of divine images.³⁹³ The facts that the *mīs pī pīt pī* and the *wpt-r* lie in the same historic stream, that they share chronological (and, to an extent, geographical) proximity, and that there was contact between Mesopotamia and Egypt throughout their history, which could have facilitated the transfer of the *mīs pī pīt pī* to Egypt or the *wpt-r* to Mesopotamia, increases the *possibility* of a historical connection, but it does not, in and of itself, demonstrate one. In order to claim there is a historical relationship between the two, we need more specific evidence of a genetic link, such as the presence of loanwords, a clear reference to the *mīs pī pīt pī* in the *wpt-r* or vice-versa, or a direct quotation of one text in the other.³⁹⁴ Thus, despite the many suggestive parallels, until evidence of a genetic link is discovered, we conclude that the *mīs pī pīt pī* and the

392. See Roth, "Fingers," 1993.

393. See §1.6, above.

394. In both rituals the newly revived image is exhorted to join the divine family. In the *mīs pī pīt pī* the priest says to the statue, "Among your brother gods you are counted" ([*ī*]-*t-ti* DINGIR.MEŠ ŠEŠ.MEŠ-*ka* [*ta-a*]-*t-tam-nu* in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 147 line 10) and "among your brother gods may you be counted" ([*ī*]-*t-ti* DINGIR.MEŠ ŠEŠ.MEŠ-*ka* [*ta-a*]-*t-tam-nu* in *ibid.*, 152–53 lines 6–7). Similarly, the newly revived statue of Rekhmire is told, "you are censured, established, between your brothers the gods (*snTr.k Dd.ti imwyt snw.k nTrw* in Episode 6, sequence position 7 in S. Quirke's translation in "Contents of the Ritual for 'Opening the Mouth'"). A similar injunction appears in the *wpt-r* of Unas, "Thou becomes a spirit, O Unas, amongst thy brothers, the gods" (Piankoff, *The Shrines*, 72, Utterance 22, no. 221). These examples may demonstrate an allusion of one ritual to the other, but they do not indicate the direction of influence.

wpt-r reflect a similar solution to the shared problem in Mesopotamia and in ancient Egypt of how to create a divine manifestation.

3.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen how, according to two specific sets of ritual texts from Mesopotamia and Egypt, a divine image was created and brought to life. The first section was devoted to the Mesopotamian *mīs pī pīt pī*. Through a reexamination of the *buginnu* and its contents, the brick of *Bēlet-ili*, and selected terminology used to describe both the statue (*dumu*, “child”) and the creative process (*wāladu*, “to give birth”), I demonstrated from evidence within the *pīt pī* specifically that the ritual was, at least in part, concerned with the ritual birth of the image. This was further suggested by the parallels between the *pīt pī* and several Late Babylonian baby incantations in which the sensory organs of the unborn child could not function until it was born. However, manufacturing imagery was also prevalent in the *mīs pī pīt pī*. Although human contributions were denied, certain incantations extolled the purity of the raw materials from which the image was formed, thus acknowledging the manufacturing process and the work of the divine craftsmen. I concluded, therefore, that the creation of a divine image in Mesopotamia was achieved through two complementary and requisite processes, both of which were ultimately attributed to the gods: the statue was both born and manufactured “in heaven.” I noted a similar emphasis in the Egyptian Opening of the Mouth ritual. Despite its differences with the *mīs pī pīt pī*, there were at least three striking parallels between the two sets of ritual texts: the rituals were performed in comparable sacred spaces (temple workshop, sacred garden, temple/tomb); they exhibited a similar overall pattern of creation, animation, feeding and clothing, and installation; and they presented the creation of a divine image in terms of birth and manufacture. In both cases the statue was considered a fully functioning, living manifestation of the divine only after undergoing the Opening of the Mouth, and in the case of Mesopotamia, first the Washing of the Mouth. In Egypt, however, the role of the human craftsmen was celebrated and commemorated rather than denied, as in the *mīs pī pīt pī*.

Determining the relationship between the two sets of texts, however, has been difficult. Because of the lack of any explicit evidence of a historical connection between the Mesopotamian and Egyptian versions, I concluded that the rituals are at least typologically related. They have a similar approach to solving a shared dilemma: how can humans create a divine manifestation? The ancients were aware, of course, that divine statues were physically constructed by human craftsmen from raw materials, but they also knew from their own life experience that *a living being was born of its mother*, who nursed it until it could eat solid food. There would have been no tension, therefore, over the fact that the Opening of the Mouth in Egypt and the Washing of the Mouth and the Opening of the Mouth

in Mesopotamia included both processes. On the contrary, manufacture and birth *had* to be combined. It was the only way to create a living divine image.

Now that we have determined how, according to the *mīs pî pīt pî* and the *wpt-r*, divine statues in Mesopotamia and ancient Egypt were created, animated and installed in their proper cultic contexts, we are ready to re-examine Gen 2:5–3:24, and specifically, the creation of Adam, in light of these rituals. This will be the subject of the following chapter.

Chapter 4

The Meaning of Šelem and Dāmût in Genesis 1:26–27 and the “Image” Concept in Genesis 2:5–3:24

4.1. Introduction

This chapter is principally concerned with defining *šelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27 and determining whether or not these same concepts, despite the absence of the terms themselves, are present in the Eden story. We must begin, therefore, with the text of Gen 1:26–27 and its translation. This will be followed by a study of the terms themselves: where do *šelem* and *dāmût* appear in the Hebrew Bible, and how are they used, especially in the book of Genesis? In order to set my analysis in context, I will then briefly survey the history of scholarship on *šelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27 before offering my interpretation of how the author used these terms to define, or re-define, the divine-human relationship in terms of kin, cult, and king. I will then re-examine the Eden story in light of our findings. Is Gen 2:5–3:24 equally concerned with the idea of humankind as created *bāšelem ’ēlōhîm*, and the themes of kin, cult, and king? If so, how is this indicated?¹ By comparing Gen 2:5–3:24 to the Mesopotamian mouth-washing and mouth-opening ceremonies and the Egyptian Opening of the Mouth ritual, I will suggest that the Eden author may have been familiar with the *mīs pî pî pî pî* and perhaps the *wpt-r*, or at least the concepts expressed therein, and that he incorporated selected features of those traditions into his account of human creation in order to (re) define the divine-human relationship.

4.2. Genesis 1:26–27: Text and Translation

26¹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדִמוּתֵנוּ וְיִרְדּוּ בְּדִגְתַּי הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם
וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל-הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל-הָרֶמֶשׂ עַל-הָאָרֶץ: 27¹ וַיְבָרֵא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם
בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם:

1. An affirmative answer to these questions requires that we reevaluate the relationship between the two creation accounts. This will be the subject of chapter 5, which includes a brief survey of the source-critical histories of both stories (Gen 1:1–2:3 and 2:5–3:24), including the issues of date and authorship for each, and my assessment of their date, authorship, and relationship to one another.

1:26 God said, “Let us make humanity in² our image, according to our³ likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the beasts and over all the earth and over every creeping thing which creeps on the earth. 1:27 So God created the man in his image;⁴ in the image of God⁵ he created him; male and female he created them.

4.3. *Şelem and Dāmût in the Hebrew Bible*

An excellent and comprehensive study on *şelem* and *dāmût* is available in R. Garr’s volume, to which I refer the reader.⁶ I will focus only on those texts which bear most directly on our study of Gen 1:26–27 and Gen 2:5–3:24, specifically, *şelem* in Genesis and the use of the Akkadian cognate *şalmu* in reference to divine and royal figures.

4.3.1. *Şelem*⁷

In the Hebrew Bible, the term *şelem* appears 17 times and generally refers to a statue, figure, or replica.⁸ Specifically, in 1 Sam 6:5, 11 it designates golden models of boils and mice. In Ps 39:7, it denotes a fleeting human image,⁹ while in Ps 73:20 it describes the physical form of the psalmist’s en-

2. For *bā* as “in” and *kā* as “according to” see G. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (WBC 1; Waco, TX: Word, 1987) 28–29; and H. Gunkel, *Genesis* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1997) 113. For the history of interpretation of these prepositions in Gen 1:26–27 see Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Commentary* (trans. J. J. Scullion; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984), 145–46; Garr, *Image and Likeness*, 95–116; and S. Herring, *Divine Substitution: Humanity as the Manifestation of Deity in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 108. I disagree with D. J. A. Clines (“The Image of God in Man.” *TB* 19 [1968] 53–103, esp. pp. 75–80) and B. Janowski (“Die Lebendige Statue Gottes Zur Anthropologie Der Priesterlichen Urgeschichte,” in *Gott und Mensch im Dialog: Festschrift für Otto Kaiser Zum 80. Geburtstag* [ed. Markus White; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004] 189–90), who identify the *bā* in Gen 1:26 as the *beth essentiae* and thus translate *başalmēnū* as “as our image,” meaning that man was not created *in* the pattern of a divine image but *to be* the divine image. The author seems to use these prepositions as a way to avoid divinizing humankind. See Gen 5:1–3, where Seth is not created *as* the image of Adam but, *as* his son, he is created *in* his image and *according to* his likeness. See also R. Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness: Humanity, Divinity, and Monotheism* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 95–115.

3. The 1cp pronominal suffix is missing in the LXX.

4. The phrase “in his image” is omitted in the LXX.

5. The Hebrew Bible reserves this phrase exclusively for humans. The animals, by contrast, are made “according to their kinds” (*lā + mîn + suffix*) in Gen 1:21, 24, 25.

6. Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness*, 117–76. See also Herring, *Divine Substitution*, 87–96, 111–27; Westermann, *Genesis*, 147–61; Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 26–33; G. Jónsson, *The Image of God: Genesis 1:26–28 in a Century of Old Testament Research* (Lund: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1988) and for classical Jewish commentary, see Menahem M. Kasher, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation: A Millennial Anthology* (trans. Rabbi Dr. Harry Freedman; New York: American Biblical Encyclopedia Society, 1953) 1:58–67; *TDOT* 12:386–396.

7. For a recent treatment of *şelem*, see Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness*, 132–76.

8. Gen 1:26, 27 (2x); 5:3; 9:6; Num 33:52; 1 Sam 6:5 (2x), 11; 2 Kgs 11:18; 2 Chr 23:17; Ps 39:7; 73:20; Ezek 7:20; 16:17; 23:14; Amos 5:26. *HALOT* 2:1029.

9. *Ibid.* and BDB 584a.

emies. Ezekiel applies the term to depictions of Babylonian royalty carved in stone relief and decorated with red paint.¹⁰ Five times, *şelem* denotes molten images, anthropomorphic metal images, and images of Baal, Sik-kuth, and Kiyyun.¹¹ In Gen 5:3, however, *şelem* refers to a human being, Seth, who was created in the image (*şelem*) and likeness (*dāmût*) of his father, Adam.

The Aramaic cognates, *şalēm*, *şelem*, and *şalm'* appear 17 times in the book of Daniel.¹² In every case, with the exception of *şalēm* in Dan 3:19, the term denotes an anthropomorphic statue.¹³ We conclude, therefore, that within the Bible both Hebrew *şelem* and Aramaic *şalēm*, *şelem*, and *şalm'* typically refer to a concrete object made of metal, painted stone, or human flesh, which is a representation, likeness, or copy of an original.¹⁴

It is worth noting, however, that aside from its five appearances in Genesis (1:26; 1:27 [2x]; 5:3; 9:6), all of which refer to the creation of humankind, more than half of the Hebrew attestations of *şelem*¹⁵ and more than 94 percent of its Aramaic cognates in Daniel¹⁶ are used in a pejorative sense to denote a counterfeit image.¹⁷ An explicitly positive or favorable meaning of *şelem* appears only when it describes the creation of humankind *bāşelem 'ēlōhīm*. Thus, in order to determine the particular shade of meaning of *şelem* in Gen 1:26–27, we will first examine its use in the book of Genesis. We will then discuss its Akkadian cognate, *şalmu*, focusing our attention on cases in which it is applied in a context similar to Gen 1:26–27, that is, where it denotes a royal figure described as a *şalmu* of the god.¹⁸

10. Ezek 23:12–17. See the use of Aramaic *şlm'* to denote a pictorial representation of a priest carved in bas-relief in Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness*, 150.

11. *Molten images*: *Şalmē massēkotām* in Num 33:52 and images of silver and gold in Ezek 7:19–20. *Metal images*: *Şalmē zākār* in Ezek 16:17. *Baal*: 2 Kgs 11:18; 2 Chr 23:17. *Sik-kuth and Kiyyun*: Amos 5:26.

12. Dan 2:31 (2x); 3:1, 2, 3 (2x), 5, 7, 10, 12, 14, 15, 18, 19.

13. In Dan 3:19 *şalēm* refers to Nebuchadnezzar's facial expression: *şalēm 'anpōhī 'eštannī*, “the image/expression of his face changed.”

14. Westermann, *Genesis*, 146; W. H. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift* (WMANT 17; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener-Verlag, 1964), 133; and P. Bird, “Male and female he created them”: Gen 1:27b in the context of the priestly account of creation,” *HTR* 74 (1981): 129–59, esp. 139–40. See also Clines, who argues that *şelem* in Ps 39:7 and 73:20 denotes “the unreality or inauthenticity of an image. . . . Greek *eikōn* and Latin *imago* display a similar shift in meaning from ‘image’ to ‘unreal appearance,’” (D. J. A. Clines, “The Etymology of Hebrew *şelem*,” *JNSL* 3 (1974): 19–25, esp. 23).

15. Seven out of thirteen uses are derogatory: Num 33:52; 2 Kgs 11:18; 2 Chr 23:17; Ezek 7:20; 16:17; 23:14; and Amos 5:26.

16. Sixteen out of seventeen references designate a statue: Dan 2:31 (2x), 32, 34, 35; 3:1, 2, 3 (2x), 5, 7, 10, 12, 14, 15, and 18.

17. The other occurrences of *şelem* in 1 Sam 6:5 (2x), 11 and in Pss 39:7 and 73:20 are neutral, or at least not pejorative.

18. The study of *şelem* and *dāmût*, appearing together and in similar contexts, has largely been ignored in previous studies on these terms in Gen 1. See 4.5, below.

4.3.2. *Ṣelem in Genesis 9:6*

The four references to humans as created in the image of God are confined to Genesis.¹⁹ We will look first at Gen 9:6, reserving our discussion of Gen 5:3 for the section on *dāmūt* because both *ṣelem* and *dāmūt* appear in Gen 5:3.

שֹׁפֵךְ דַּם הָאָדָם בְּאָדָם דָּמוֹ יִשְׁפֹּךְ כִּי בְצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אֶת־הָאָדָם:

Whoever sheds (lit., “pours out”) the blood of man, by man²⁰ shall his blood be shed (“poured out”), because in the image of God he (God) made man.²¹

According to Gen 9:6, anyone who kills another should himself be killed by a human agent.²² The reason given for this is that humans were made in God’s image (*kī baṣelem ’ēlōhīm ’āsāh ’et hā’ādām*). What is it about the nature of humankind as God’s image that requires the death penalty for murder?

4.3.2.1. *God as the Divine Kinsman/Avenger of Blood* (2 Chronicles 24 and Psalm 9:13)

When one pours out the blood of another, the LORD requires that the offender pay with his own lifeblood.²³ 2 Chronicles 24 records one such case. As Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest dies, he cries out for the LORD to avenge (*drš*) his unjust death at the hand of the evil king, Joash. Yahweh sends the Syrian army and even Joash’s own servants to execute his divine vengeance. Joash is killed, according to 2 Chr 24:25, “because of the shed (spilled, poured out) blood (*dāmē*) of the son of Jehoiada the priest.” Although Yahweh uses human agents, Zechariah understands that *God* is the divine avenger of his (Zechariah’s) shed blood, as revealed in his dying words, “May the LORD see and avenge!” (*yēre’ yhw̄h wayidrōš*).

The psalmist ascribes this same role to Yahweh, when he proclaims:

Sing praises to the LORD, who sits enthroned in Zion!

Tell among the peoples his deeds!

For he who avenges shed/spilt/poured out blood (*dōrēš dāmîm*)²⁴ is mindful of them;

19. Gen 1:26, 27 (2×); 5:3; 9:6.

20. The *bə* indicates the instrument of punishment, that is, man. See N. Sarna, *Genesis* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989) 62 and n. 2.

21. U. Cassuto, in *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961–64) 127, comments, “Note the chiasmic parallelism, which repeats in the second member of the sentence every word of the first in reverse order, as though reflecting the principle of measure for measure.” See also Gunkel, *Genesis*, 149.

22. See Exod 21:22–25; Lev 24:17–22; Deut 19:16–21. But Yahweh is clearly the one who “requires a reckoning” (*drš*), which is mentioned three times in Gen 9:5.

23. Cf. Gen 42:22; Ezek 33:6, 10.

24. The term for “blood” in Ps 9:13 is the plural *dāmîm*, referring to dispersed blood, that is, blood that has been shed, spilled or poured out. See Gen 4:10 and P. Joüon and

he does not forget the cry of the afflicted. (Ps 9:12–13[11–12])

Human blood avengers are referred to in the Old Testament as *gō’el haddām* (Num 35:19, 21, 24, 27; Deut 19:6, 12; Josh 20:3, 5, 9; 2 Sam 14:11). *Gā’al* “to redeem,” is perhaps better translated, as Cross suggests, “to act as a kinsman.”²⁵ The participle *gō’el* refers to a close male blood relative responsible for defending and maintaining the welfare and rights of his family members. When paired with *dam* (“blood”), *gō’el haddām* (“the avenger of blood”) designates a specific duty of the *gō’el*, that of vindicating his murdered family member.

I must point out that nowhere in the Old Testament is Yahweh referred to explicitly *gō’el haddām*, but Zechariah’s cry for Yahweh “to see and avenge” (*yēre’ yhwḥ wəyidrōš*) and the psalmist’s identification of the LORD as the avenger of shed/poured out/spilt blood (*dōrēš dāmim*) indicates that Yahweh was understood to fulfill this role.

What does this reveal about Yahweh’s relationship to humanity? If he is indeed the divine blood avenger, then he is humanity’s *nearest kin*. Human beings are members of his clan and are, therefore, kin to one another. For this reason shedding human blood (*šōpēk dam hā’adam*) is fratricide.²⁶ Furthermore, to murder one’s kinsman is to slay a member of God’s family. “The one who strikes you,” says Zechariah (2:12–13, Eng 2:8–9), “strikes the pupil of his (Yahweh’s) eye” (*hannōgēa’ bākem nōgēa’ bəbābat ‘ēnō*). As the divine blood avenger, the LORD may rightly take the life of the offender, whether he does so himself directly through divine judgment or through an appointed human agent.

In sum, God is the creator of humankind, and therefore he, or one appointed by him, is the only one who can take a human life.²⁷ For another man to do so is tantamount to insurrection. That is, to kill a human being

T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1993) 500 no. 136; GKC 400 no. 124n; see B. Waltke and M. O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 119–20 §7.4.1b.

25. F. M. Cross, “Kingship and Covenant in Ancient Israel,” in *From Epic to Canon: History and Literature in Ancient Israel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998) 3–21, esp. p. 4.

26. Gordon Wenham observes that Gen 9:5 “is the first time *’āḥ* ‘brother’ has been used since Gen 4, where the term is harped on to highlight the incongruity of Cain’s action” (*Genesis*, 193). He concludes, “*’āḥ* in Gen 9:5 is an allusion to Cain’s murder of Abel” (*ibid.*). Kenneth Mathews (*Genesis*, 404) also concludes that *’āḥ* in Gen 9:5 alludes to Cain’s murder of Abel, but it is *the reason he gives for the allusion* that I find compelling: to demonstrate that “murder is fratricide by virtue of the inherent covenant all people have with God as created in his ‘image’.” We are to that fundamental degree all brothers and sisters in that we are all human” (*Genesis*, 404). Whether or not *’āḥ* in Gen 9:5 refers to brotherhood and/or kinship rather than a fixed idiom meaning “each human being” or “one another,” I think we are on firmer ground to suggest that humanity is a family based on the phrase *bāšelem ʾēlōhīm* in the following verse, Gen 9:6.

27. See Gen 7:21–23 where Yahweh blotted out (*wayyimah*) man and all living creatures on earth.

is to exert oneself as Creator-God.²⁸ Furthermore, because of the correspondence between God and humans, to harm them is, in some way, an attack on God.²⁹ This principle is illustrated in Zech 2:12[8], “the one who touches (*ngʿ*) you touches (*ngʿ*) the pupil of his (Yahweh’s) eye (*bābat ʿênô*).” Yahweh responds to the nations who plundered (*šll*) Israel, “now, I am going to raise my hand against them, and they shall become plunder (*šll*) for their slaves” (Zech 2:13[9]). Just as a human, acting on God’s behalf and under God’s command as judge and administrator of justice, kills one who has killed, Yahweh, the judge and administrator of justice *par excellence*, will make plunder (*šll*) out of those who plundered (*šll*) Israel, Yahweh’s people whom he created and whom he loves. Thus, the murder of a human being created in God’s image, even if it is by another human being who, by nature of the fact that he exists, was also created in God’s image, is, at some level, an attack on God himself and therefore must be punished in kind.

Why is the murder of a human being considered, at some level, an attack on God? The answer is suggested by the idea, which will be developed below, that in Gen 1:26–27 and Gen 2:5–3:24 Yahweh is portrayed as the father of humanity. Thus, because murder was understood as an attack on one’s entire family, this would, according to Genesis 1, include God who is the divine *paterfamilias*.³⁰

How, then, does Gen 9:6 illumine our understanding of what it means that humankind is created *bəselem ʿēlōhîm*? It clearly demonstrates that humans are not God nor are they the ultimate lawmakers. However, it does indicate that there is a profound level of correspondence between God and humans. That is, humankind acts on God’s behalf, in the capacity of a divinely appointed judge and administrator and as one who obeys and enforces the divine law authored by God.³¹ Thus, being created in the image (*selem*) of God has something to do with representing him in the realm of law and justice, but it is clearly distinct from being God himself. Moreover, Gen 9:6 also indicates that the murder of a human being is, at some level,

28. Furthermore, murder stands in direct opposition to God’s command to “be fruitful and multiply.”

29. Just as Adam and Eve’s attempted usurpation of God’s position as ultimate arbiter was punished with expulsion from the garden of Eden and death, so also is murder. In murder, not only does one destroy a living being created in God’s image and likeness, but by doing so, the murderer puts himself in the position of God, who, as creator, alone has the right to end life. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 468 comments, “Murder . . . is a direct attack on God’s right of dominion. Every murderer confronts God; murder is direct and unbridled revolt against God.” Note also Garr’s comment, “any attempt to obliterate humanity constitutes, for P, an attempt to obliterate God” (*In His Own Image and Likeness*, 161).

30. Note the comments of F. M. Cross, “If the blood of a kinsman was spilled, the blood of the kinship group, of each member, was spilled” (“Kinship and Covenant,” 3).

31. Levenson describes it as follows: “he has appointed humanity to be his viceroy, the highest ranking commoner, as it were, ruling with the authority of the king. The human race is YHWH’s plenipotentiary, his stand in” (*Creation and the Persistence of Evil*, 113–14).

an attack on God, suggesting, as we have noted above, that God is the “kin” of humankind.

4.3.3. *Şalmu*

The Akkadian cognate *şalmu* is best rendered in English as “image,” which can take the form of a statue, relief, drawing, constellation, figurine, bodily shape, stature, or likeness.³² The verbs used in conjunction with *şalmu* demonstrate that it can be a three-dimensional object that is made or manufactured (*banû, epēšu*), erected (*kunnu* [D], *zaqāpu*), or set up (*şuzuzzu* [Š]), or a two dimensional object that is drawn (*eşēqu, eşēru*) or inscribed (*şaṭāru*).³³ It can also refer to priests or kings who are described as the image of a god.³⁴ In short, its semantic range is similar to its Hebrew and Aramaic cognates. It refers to images in the form of three-dimensional statues, carved reliefs, drawn or painted images, and select human beings, specifically priests or kings.³⁵ However, *şalmu* is not limited to representation. In the mouth-washing and mouth-opening texts, the divine statue is referred to throughout the ritual as *alam/şalmu*, even after it has been brought to life.³⁶ This suggests that when applied to a divine statue, *şalmu* can refer to

32. I. Winter, comments, “The term is generally said to ‘mean’ variously statue, sculpture, relief, painting, or metal engraving, depending upon the context. But no, the words means, consistently and only, image, which then may occur as a statue, or on a stele, carved in relief, painted, drawn or engraved” (“Art in Empire: The Royal Image and the Visual Dimensions of Assyrian Ideology,” in *Assyria 1995: Proceedings of the 10th Anniversary Symposium of the Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project* [ed. S. Parpola and R. M. Whiting; Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 1997] 359–81, quoting p. 365). See also I. Winter, “Idols of the King: Royal Images as Recipients of Ritual Action in Ancient Mesopotamia” *JRS* 6 (1992) 13–42, esp. pp. 15, 36 n. 5; *CAD* § 78–85; Bird, “Male and Female He Created Them’,” 142 and n. 34; and Z. Bahrani, *The Graven Image: Representation in Babylonia and Assyria* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003) 123–48.

33. On the priest as the image of Marduk, see the exorcist’s spell in *CAD* § 85b; and Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness*, 145. For the king as the image of Marduk, see *SAA* 8 333 rev. 2–6; and *SAA* 10 196 obv. 17–rev. 6, as cited in *ibid.*, 145.

34. *Ibid.*, 144–45; Winter, “Idols of the King” and “Art in Empire”; and S. Cole, and P. Machinist, eds. *Letters from Priests to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal* (Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1998), §34 lines 12, 14, 16, and rev. 2; §46 line r. 11; and §196 line r. 3’).

35. The use of *şalmu* to refer to nonpriestly and nonroyal humans is not attested in Akkadian. For a list and discussion of objects and people referred to as *şalmu*, see E. Van Buren, “The *şalme* in Mesopotamian Art and Religion,” *Or* 10 (1941) 62–92; and E. Curtis, “Images in Mesopotamia and the Bible: A Comparative Study,” in *The Bible in the Light of Cuneiform Literature: Scripture in Context III* (ed. Bruce William Jones, Gerald L. Mattingly and William Hallo; Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1990) 31–56, esp. pp. 36–38.

36. C. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia: The Mesopotamian Mis Pi Ritual* (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2001), 66 lines 189–90 (2x); 76, 80 line 48; 76, 80 line 54 (2x); 135–36, 149 line 49ab; 138–40, 150 lines 55ab–65ab; 144, 152, lines 99, 100; 163, 184 line 23ab. See also the references to the image as *alam/şalmu* in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 116, 120 lines 32, 40; 140, 151 lines 69ab–70ab; and 143, 151 line 87/8.

a divine manifestation, that is, a theophany.³⁷ Garr comments: “When an ‘image’ represents a deity, the distinction between representation and referent may disappear. A divine image may be completely transformed into its referent through the performance of ritual,”³⁸ and further, “When the image attains life, it becomes the vehicle through which the reference is manifest. More than a representation, then, the similitive image becomes its referent.”³⁹

4.3.4. *Dāmût in the Hebrew Bible*

The abstract noun *dāmût*, derived from the verb *dmh*, “to resemble, be like,” appears 25 times in the Hebrew Bible.⁴⁰ It expresses similarity, likeness or correspondence of one item to another, whether literal similarity, such as that of a model of an altar to its original, as in 2 Kgs 16:10, or metaphorical likeness, as in Ps 58:5, where the speech of the wicked is compared to a serpent’s venom. In the LXX, it is rendered most frequently by *homoiōma*, “likeness, form, appearance,” or the related *homoiōsis*, “likeness, resemblance.”⁴¹ However, in Gen 5 *dāmût* is translated with *eikōn* (5:1) “image, likeness”⁴² and *idéa*, “appearance, form” (5:3). Nearly two-thirds of its appearances are concentrated in the book of Ezekiel, where the prophet uses *dāmût* to describe the contents of his visions. In the middle of an object resembling gleaming metal (*kəʿên haḥašmal* in 1:4) was “the likeness of four living beings” (*dāmût ʿarbaʿ ḥayyôt*) whose form was like that of man (*dāmût ʿādām*; 1:5). The likeness of their faces (*dāmût pənêhem pənê ʿādām*) resembled human faces (1:10). Ezekiel further describes their appearance as having the likeness (*dāmût*) of burning coals of fire (*kəgaḥâlê ʿēš*, 1:13). Over their heads was the likeness (*dāmût*) of a brilliant expanse (*rāqīaʿ kəʿên haqqeraḥ*) over which was the likeness (*dāmût*) of a sapphire-studded throne. Seated above this likeness (*dāmût*) of a throne was a likeness (*dāmût*) with a

37. See Winter, *Idols of the King*, 14; T. Jacobsen, “The Graven Image,” in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (ed. Paul D. Hanson, S. Dean McBride, and Patrick D. Miller; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987) 15–32, esp. pp. 16–18; A. Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth: The Consecration of Divine Images in Mesopotamia,” in *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (ed. Karel van der Toorn; Leuven: Peeters, 1997) 44–72, esp. p. 46; Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 6–7; Wildberger, “*šelem*,” in *TLOT* 3:1080–85 esp. 3:1081; and *TDOT* 12:386–96. Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness*, 144.

38. *Ibid.*, 141.

39. *Ibid.*, 142–43. See also Winter, *Idols of the King*, 34–36.

40. *HALOT* 1:225. See also *TDOT* 1:257 and *TLOT* 1:339. Gen 1:26; 5:1, 3; 2 Kgs 16:10; 2 Chr 4:3; Ps 58:5; Isa 13:4; 40:18; Ezek 1:5 (2×), 10, 13, 16, 22, 26 (3×), 28; 8:2; 10:1, 10, 21, 22; 23:15; Dan 10:16.

41. Gen 1:26; 2 Kgs 16:10; 2 Chr 4:3; Ps 58:5; Isa 13:4; Ezek 1:10, 16, 22, 26 (3×), 28; 8:2; 10:1, 10, 21, 22; 23:15; and Dan 10:16.

42. In Gen 1:26–27, *šelem* is also rendered as *eikōn*, suggesting that the LXX translators understood that *šelem* and *dāmût* could be synonyms.

human form (*kəmar’ēh ‘āḏām*, 1:26).⁴³ The frequent appearance of *dāmût* in the descriptions of Ezekiel’s visions demonstrates that the prophet is struggling to describe what he sees.⁴⁴ He uses the term to relate the unfamiliar to the familiar, to put into language that which defies description. He did not see a human but something *like* a human. He did not see a throne, but something *resembling* a throne. What Ezekiel observed corresponded to and resembled things that were familiar to him, but the referents themselves were foreign. Thus, *dāmût* refers to correspondence and likeness, but it does not seem to indicate a copy or a facsimile, as can *şelem*. In sum, while the semantic ranges of *dāmût* and *şelem* overlap, especially in the area of representation, these terms are not always synonymous.

4.3.5. *Dāmût* and *şelem* in Genesis 5:1–3

1:5 זֶה סֵפֶר תּוֹלְדֹת אָדָם בְּיוֹם בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אָדָם בְּדְמוּת אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אֹתוֹ: 2:5 זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָאם וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָם אָדָם בְּיוֹם הַבְּרָאָם 3:5 וַיְחִי אָדָם שְׁלֹשִׁים וּנְמָאֵת שָׁנָה וַיּוֹלֶד בְּדְמוּתוֹ כְּצִלְמוֹ וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ שֵׁת:

This is the scroll of the generations of Adam. When God created⁴⁵ man, in the likeness of God he made him.⁴⁶ Male and female he created them. He blessed them and named them Mankind on the day he created them. Adam lived 130⁴⁷ years and then he fathered (a son)⁴⁸ in his likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.

As discussed above, *dāmût* and *şelem* are not always semantic equivalents. However, Gen 5:3 may be an example where the terms are, more or less, interchangeable. Here, *dāmût* and *şelem* express correspondence between children and parents, specifically humankind’s correspondence to God and Seth’s likeness to his father, Adam, but they do not suggest exact copy, facsimile, or replica. Seth is in some way similar to his father, but he is not Adam, just as Adam and Eve resemble God, yet they are not God. No explanation of what constitutes the likeness is given. Rather, it seems that the son resembles his father, and by analogy, humans correspond to God, simply because they were created by their father. Thus, correspondence is intrinsic to being human and is passed on by the parents, who themselves are created in the image and likeness of God, to their children at birth.⁴⁹

43. Literally, “a likeness according to/in the form of a human.” See also Ezek 1:28; 8:2; 10:1, 10, 21, 22; 23:15.

44. Ezek 1:5, 10, 13, 16, 22, 26, 28; 8:2; 10:1, 10, 21, 22; 23:15.

45. Literally, “On the day when God created.”

46. Perhaps *şelem* was omitted so as not to disrupt the assonance of ‘āḏām, ‘āḏām, and *dāmût*. See Sarna, *Genesis*, 40.

47. The LXX reads *diakósia kai triákonta étē*, “230 years”.

48. In the Hiphil of *yld*, the subject is implied. See HALOT 2:411–12.

49. Westermann claims, “It (correspondence) is something given to humans by the very fact of existence,” in *Genesis 1–11: A Continental Commentary* (trans. John H.

This same pairing of terms appears in a bilingual Aramaic-Akkadian inscription on a statue of an Assyrian provincial official from the 9th century B.C.E.⁵⁰ The statue, found at Tell Fakhariyeh in the upper Habur region of Syria, is referred to in the Aramaic text as both “the likeness (*dmwt*)” of Hadad-yisʿī (line 1, and “this likeness” *dmwt*’ *z’t* in line 15), the governor of Guzan, and “the image (*šlm*)” of Hadad-yisʿī.” The Akkadian version renders both Aramaic terms with *šalmu*,⁵¹ suggesting, as many others have noted, that *šelem* and *dāmût* are semantic equivalents both here and in Gen 5:3.⁵²

In conclusion, *dāmût* and *šelem* in Gen 5:1–3 are, it seems, roughly synonymous. Both terms refer to correspondence, similarity, and resemblance. What Gen 5:3 suggests further is that in humans, these qualities, whatever they are, are passed on biologically through reproductive means.⁵³ Now that we have examined the meaning of *šelem* and *dāmût* and their use in the Bible, we will proceed with a survey of how they have been interpreted by biblical scholars.

4.4. Brief and Selective History of Interpretation of Šelem and Dāmût in Genesis 1:26–27

Despite the considerable interest in *šelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27 and the vast amount of literature published on these verses,⁵⁴ most of the interpretations generally fall into one of four major categories: image and likeness refer to (1) humanity’s mental and/or spiritual resemblance to God; (2) humanity’s physical resemblance to God’s corporeal form; (3) humanity’s unique capacity to relate to God; or (4) humanity’s status as God’s royal representatives on earth. Each of these interpretations will be

Scullion; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994) 356. See Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness*, 170 and n. 292.

50. For a recent bibliography, see *ibid.*, 227, nn. 1–12.

51. *Dmwt*’ as Akkadian *šalmu* in line 15 and Akkadian *šalmu* for Aramaic *šlm* in lines 12, 16.

52. Although I would agree that *dāmût* and *šelem* in Gen 1 are playing with the notion of humanity as a “statue,” in some way, of God, the primary metaphor seems to be one of kinship. Those who argue for a distinction between *dāmût* and *šelem* in Gen 1 (i.e., Herring, *Divine Substitution*, 111–12) fail to recognize that *when paired*, *dāmût* and *šelem*, and similar “likeness” terminology, are synonyms denoting a filial relationship. This meaning suits the context of Gen 1 quite well. See §4.5 below. See also Garr, *In His Own Image and Likeness*, 228 and nn. 8–11.

53. Garr comments, “God and Adam each create תולדת אדם in a manner that is appropriate to their nature. God ‘creates’ the human race (Gen 5:1ba.2a); Adam ‘fathers’ a son (v.3ab); and, afterwards, ‘likeness’ is a mechanical, genealogical, and self-perpetuating inheritance” (*ibid.*, 127).

54. What follows is only a cursory introduction to some of the major interpretations of *šelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27. For a summary of the history of interpretation of Gen 1:26–27, see Jónsson, *The Image of God*; Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 147–58; and E. Curtis, *Man as the Image of God in Genesis in the Light of Ancient Near Eastern Parallels* (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1984), 1–60.

summarized briefly before we offer our tentative interpretation of *şelem* and *dəmət* in Gen 1:26–27.

4.4.1. Humans Resemble God in Their Mental and Spiritual Capacity

Philo was the first to develop fully the notion that image and likeness could not refer to man’s physical body because God does not have a human form, nor is the human form godlike. Rather, “image” must refer to man’s mental and spiritual capacity.⁵⁵ This was the prevailing view during the first two centuries C.E. and continued in popularity with Augustine, who claimed that human likeness to God was reflected in their memory, understanding, free will, and ability to know and love God.⁵⁶ Martin Luther agreed. He claimed, “When Moses says that man was created also in the similitude of God, he indicates that man is not only like God in this respect that he has the ability to reason, or an intellect, and a will, but also that he has a likeness of God, that is, a will and intellect by which he understands God and by which he desires what God desires.”⁵⁷

This was also a popular understanding of the *imago dei* among German scholars during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Dillmann argued that *şelem* and *dəmət* could not refer to corporeal resemblance because God is spirit and cannot be represented materially. The likeness, therefore, was in human mental capabilities and their desire for the eternal, true, and good.⁵⁸ S. R. Driver agreed, claiming that image and likeness to God was manifest in human ability to reason and comprehend moral and religious truth.⁵⁹

4.4.2. Humans Resemble God in Their Corporeal Form

That man’s body resembles the body of God is a prominent idea in rabbinic theology. The premier work on the subject remains A. Marmorstein’s *Essays in Anthropomorphism*, in which Marmorstein credits the school of Rabbi Akiva and their literal reading of the text with the development of an anthropomorphic understanding of God.⁶⁰

55. He was likely motivated by a desire to emphasize God’s immaterial and wholly other nature so as to distance God from the human body. See Jónsson, *The Image of God*, 11.

56. *The Trinity*, 10.12, in Jónsson, *The Image of God*, 13 n. 21.

57. N. Jastram, “Man as Male and Female: Created in the Image of God,” *CBQ* 60 (2004) 12–13. However, Luther also understood there to be a physical dimension to the image of God. Prelapsarian man was physically superior. He had sharper eyesight and was physically stronger (Jastram, “Man as Male and Female,” 13).

58. A. Dillmann, *Genesis Critically and Exegetically Expounded* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1897) 1:81–82.

59. S. R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis* (London: Methuen, 1907) 32.

60. A. Marmorstein, *Essays in Anthropomorphism*, vol. 2: *The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God* (New York: Ktav, 1968), 1–157, esp. pp. 9, 32–35, 37, 56, 71. On the body of God, see M. Bar-Ilan, “The Hand of God: A Chapter in Rabbinic Anthropomorphism,” in *Rashi*

A similar view was shared by H. Gunkel, T. Nöldeke, B. Duhm, and J. Skinner.⁶¹ Nöldeke related Hebrew *šelem* to Arabic *šalama*, “to cut off” or “pluck out,” regarding sculpture. He concluded that *šelem* refers to a physical representation, as in Gen 5:3, and that this is its meaning in Gen 1:27.⁶² Gunkel also based his understanding of *šelem* and *dāmūt* in Gen 1:26–27 on the parallel in Gen 5:1–3. He comments: “God created Adam in his image; Adam begot Seth in his image. The second statement is very clear: the son looks like the father; he resembles him in form and appearance. The first statement is to be interpreted accordingly: the first human resembles God in form and appearance.”⁶³

Gunkel and Duhm heavily influenced P. Humbert, whose 1940 article on the *imago dei* brought unparalleled attention to the idea that man bore a physical likeness to God.⁶⁴ Based on a thorough study of the terms *šelem* and *dāmūt*, he concluded that human likeness to God does not lie in intellectual, moral, nor spiritual abilities, but, rather, in their physical resemblance.⁶⁵ This was adopted by Köhler who argued further that human physical likeness to God was manifest specifically in their erect posture. He concluded: “God creates man in such a way that he alone in contrast to the beasts has an upright form. In this respect man is clearly distinguished from the beast and . . . is raised above the beasts and made to approach nearer to God.”⁶⁶ However, von Rad, J. J. Stamm, and others concluded that Humbert’s interpretation was one-sided. “Image” and “likeness” may refer predominately to physical similarity, but it must have included an inner, spiritual dimension as well.⁶⁷

1040–1990: *Hommage a Ephraïm E. Urbach* (ed. G. Sed-Rajna; Paris: du Cerf, 1993); A. G. Gottstein, “The Body as Image of God in Rabbinic Literature,” *HTR* 87 (1994) 171–95; and on the precise measurements of God’s divine body, see Martin S. Cohen, *The Shi’ur qomah: Liturgy and Theurgy in Pre-Kabbalistic Jewish Mysticism* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983); and Martin S. Cohen, *The Shi’ur qomah: Texts and Recensions* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985).

61. H. Gunkel, *Genesis* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), 113–14. T. Nöldeke, “*Šelem und šalmawet*,” *ZAW* 17 (1897): 183–87. B. Duhm, *Die Psalmen* (Frieberg: Mohr Siebeck, 1899), 28. J. Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1910).

62. Nöldeke, “*Šelem und šalmawet*,” 183–87.

63. Gunkel, *Genesis*, 113. However, he did not fully exclude the notion that the likeness included a spiritual component.

64. Humbert, P., *Études Sur Le Récit Du Paradis Et De La Chute Dans La Genèse* (Mémoires de l’Université de Neuchâtel 14; Neuchâtel: Secrétariat de l’Université, 1940).

65. *Ibid.*, 157.

66. Ludwig Köhler, *Old Testament Theology* (trans. A. S. Todd; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1957), 147.

67. G. von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Old Testament Library; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972) 58; J. J. Stamm, “Die Imago-Lehre von Karl Barth und die theologischen Wissenschaften,” in *Antwort: Festschrift K. Barth* (ed. E. Wolf et. al.; Zollikon-Zürich: Evangelischer-Verlag, 1956), 4–98, esp. p. 98.

4.4.3. Humans as God's Counterpart

This view is best represented by the Swiss theologian, Karl Barth, who interpreted image and likeness to mean that man alone, among all the creatures, was created for a unique relationship with God.⁶⁸ People can act and respond to God. Unlike the animals, they can enter into a covenant relationship with God. This relationship is defined by two features of the creation account in Genesis 1: the plural in 1:26, "Let us make" (*na'âseh*), which Barth interpreted as a reference to the plurality within the one God; and the creation of humanity in two distinct genders (1:27). That is, by being created male and female, humans are both plural and differentiated and thus reflect the nature and relationship within the godhead. Barth concludes, "The point of the text is that God willed to create man as a being corresponding to His own being—in such a way that He Himself (even if in His knowledge of Himself) is the original and prototype, and man the copy and imitation."⁶⁹

This idea was also expressed by T. C. Vriezen, who concluded that it is the special relationship between God and humans that qualifies humans as God's image. He claimed not only that humankind alone among the creatures has a direct and personal relationship with God but that this relationship is defined as one of a son to his father.⁷⁰

C. Westermann also understood image and likeness to refer to the divine-human relationship. He comments, "The uniqueness of human beings consists in their being God's counterparts. The relationship to God is not something which is added to human existence; humans are created in such a way that their very existence is intended to be their relationship to God."⁷¹ However, he distinguishes his interpretation from others by arguing that Gen 1:26–27 is concerned first and foremost with the *process* of human creation rather than with human nature. He remarks, "When it is said in the context of primeval event that 'God created man. . .,' then something is being said about the beginning of humanity that is not accessible to our understanding. . . . It is not possible to detach what is said about the image and likeness of God from this event. Any such further determination would deprive the process of the creation of human beings of its uniqueness."⁷²

68. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 3: *The Doctrine of Creation, Part I* (ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1958), 182–206. See also F. Horst, "Face to Face: The Biblical Doctrine of the Image of God," *Interpretation* 4 (1950): 259–70.

69. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 3:197. See also Jónsson, *The Image of God*, 72–73.

70. He states, "que c'est lui seul, avec qui Dieu a un rapport direct et personnel; comme le fils représente le père, l'homme représente Dieu; il occupe la place d'un fils de Dieu" (T. C. Vriezen, "La creation de l'homme d'après l'image de Dieu," *Oudtestamentische Studiën* 2 [1943]: 87–105, esp. p. 104).

71. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Continental Commentary*, 156.

72. *Ibid.*

4.4.4. Humans as God's Royal Representatives on Earth

J. Hehn is recognized as the first scholar to interpret *šelem* and *dāmût* in light of Babylonian and Egyptian parallels.⁷³ These parallels, which referred to the king as the image of the god, led Hehn to the conclusion that image and likeness in Gen 1:26–27 are royal designations for humanity. He was followed by G. von Rad, who argued that *šelem* in Genesis 1 must be understood in light of the broader Near Eastern royal traditions, especially those from Egypt, of which it was undoubtedly a part.⁷⁴ Through an extensive study of Near Eastern texts that present the king as a divine image, Wildberger and Schmidt advanced the notion that man as God's image in Gen 1:26–27 had its origins in Mesopotamian and especially Egyptian royal ideology.⁷⁵ Their work has had a powerful influence in *imago dei* studies, as indicated by the many scholars who have adopted and developed their ideas.⁷⁶

4.4.5. Summary and Evaluation

Each of these interpretations has its merits. Certainly, humankind's ability to think and reason in Gen 2:5–3:24 distinguishes them from the animals, as Philo, Luther, and others have claimed, as does the unique divine-human relationship portrayed in Gen 2:5–3:24, as Barth, Vriezen, and Westermann concluded. Furthermore, the notion that humans resemble God in their corporeal form rightly emphasizes that *šelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27 should be understood in light of Gen 5:1–3. However, this theory interprets the terms far too narrowly in that it limits the correspondence to physical resemblance and does not include functional similarity, which *šelem* and *dāmût* imply.⁷⁷

The comparison of Gen 1:26–27 with Mesopotamian and Egyptian royal ideology was certainly an interpretive breakthrough, and it is now widely accepted that *šelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27 refer to humankind's royal status. In each case, however, humankind's intellectual abilities, their unique relationship with God, and even their status as the divinely appointed administrators over creation seem to be a result of being created in God's image rather than a definition of what it means to be made *bašelem* *ʾēlōhîm*. Thus, despite the merits of each interpretation, *šelem* and *dāmût* in

73. J. Hehn, "Zum Terminus 'Bild Gottes,'" in *Festschrift Eduard Sachau zum siebzigsten Geburtstag* (Berlin: Reimer, 1915), 36–52.

74. Von Rad, *Genesis*, 58.

75. H. Wildberger, "Das Abbild Gottes. Gen. I, 26–30," *TZ* 21 (1965): 245–59, 481–501; W. H. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift* and *The Faith of the Old Testament: A History* (trans. John Sturdy; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983), 194–98. For Mesopotamian origins, see Wildberger, "Das Abbild Gottes," 255, 488.

76. For example, Clines, "The Image of God in Man"; and Bird, "Male and Female He Created Them."

77. Note that in Gen 1:26–28 the command to rule and subdue immediately follows the creation of man in God's image and thus explains, in part, what it means to be made in the image and likeness of God.

the context of Gen 1:26–27 remain largely undefined. The perplexing question concerning what the author intended to communicate about humankind and the divine-human relationship by describing humanity as made in the image and according to the likeness of God has not been answered fully or satisfactorily. It does seem, however, as others have argued,⁷⁸ that *şelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27 must be understood in light of these same terms in Gen 5:1–3, where they describe the father-son relationship between Adam and Seth.

4.5. Humans as God's “Son”?

That humanity is, at some level, depicted as the “royal son” of God seems much closer to the sense of *şelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27. As Vriezen and others⁷⁹ have suggested, and as Gen 5:1–3 indicates, *şelem* and *dāmût* are not only royal terms but they can be used to indicate a filial relationship.⁸⁰ This idea was developed by M. G. Kline, who comments:

Image of God and son of God are mutually explanatory concepts. Clearly man's likeness to the Creator . . . is to be understood as the likeness which a son bears to his father. And that understanding of the image concept . . . is further and unmistakably corroborated by Genesis 5:1–3 as it brings together God's creation of Adam and Adam's begetting of Seth, expressing the relation of the human father and son in terms of the image-likeness that defines man's relation to the Creator. To be the image of God is to be the son of God.⁸¹

The biblical author avoids explicit birthing language like that which appears in the *mīs pī* and the *wpt-r* texts to describe the ritual creation of a divine image, and even distances *ʾādām* from Elohim by describing them as made *in* the image (*başalmēnū*) and *according to* the likeness (*kiḏmūtēnū*) of God, rather than asserting that humankind *is* the image and likeness of the divine.⁸² However, in Gen 1:26–27 there is, as Kline observes, “a kind of divine authoring *analogous* to human procreation.”⁸³ He comments further:

78. Gunkel, *Genesis*, 113; and Vriezen, “La creation,” 87–105, esp. p. 104.

79. Vriezen, “La creation,” 104; Bird, “Male and Female He created them,” 144; E. Firmage, “Genesis 1 and the Priestly Agenda,” *JSOT* 82 (1999): 97–114, esp. p. 101 n. 12; M. G. Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview* (Overland Park: Two Age, 2000) 45–46; A. Schüle, *Der Prolog der hebräischen Bibel: Der literar- und theologischesgeschichte Diskurs der Urgeschichte (Gen 1–11)* (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 2006) 81 n. 20; and D. Fleming, “Les Cieux ne lui Sufficient pas: L'homme et la maison de dieu dans le livre de la Genèse” (unpublished) 29.

80. On the semantic range of *Şelem*, see §§1.1 and 4.3, especially §§4.3.1, 4.3.2, and 4.3.5.

81. Kline, *Kingdom Prologue*, 46.

82. See the description of Tukulti-Ninurta I, the image of Enlil, in P. Machinist, “Kingship and Divinity in Imperial Assyria,” in *Text, Artifact, and Image: Revealing Ancient Israelite Religion* (ed. Gary M. Beckman and Theodore J. Lewis. Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 2006) 152–88, esp. p. 161 and the comments on 163–64.

83. Kline, *Kingdom Prologue*, 45, my emphasis.

What is thus simply suggested of the father-son imagery in the record of creational origins becomes virtually explicit in the record of the birth of Seth in Genesis 5:1–3. In this passage a statement of Adam’s creation in the likeness of God is directly juxtaposed to a statement that Adam begat a son in his own likeness and image. Clearly we are being advised that there is a similarity between these two processes, both of which result in products like their authors.⁸⁴

In addition to the connection between *šelem*, *dāmūt*, and sonship in Gen 5:1–3 and the explicit reference to these same terms in Gen 1:26–27, the idea that these terms in Genesis 1 refer to sonship is further suggested by the following factors, which will be discussed below in order: the immediately preceding context in Gen 1:11–25, the presentation of Yahweh as father in the Hebrew Bible, and the idea expressed in Assyrian royal ideology that the king could be both the *šalmu* and the son of the god.

4.5.1. Genesis 1:11–27: Humans as God’s “Kind”?

In Gen 1:11–12, God creates vegetation, plants, and fruit trees, all of which reproduce “each according to its kind” (*lāmînô*, *lāmînēhû*). Three times in these two verses alone, the phrase “according to its kind” is used to describe the correspondence between the plants and fruit trees that God created and the next generation of plants and fruit produced by the vegetation and trees themselves. God also created the sea creatures and birds “according to their kind” (*lāmînēhem* in Gen 1:21). He saw that it was good and he commanded them to be fruitful and multiply in their respective domains, each according to their own kind.⁸⁵ God then made all the living creatures inhabit the earth, each “according to its kind” (vv. 23–25 *lāmînāh*, *lāmînēhû*), and he saw that this, too, was good. In total, the phrase “according to its/their kind” is repeated 10 times in these 7 verses alone (Gen 1:11–12 and 1:21–25). Clearly, the author is emphasizing the creation and reproduction of each species *according to its own distinctive type or class*.⁸⁶ Thus, the ancient audience may have been surprised when they heard or read the next two verses in which the creation of humans is described not as “according to his kind,” as they might have expected, but as “in the image of” and “according to the likeness of” Elohim. This juxtaposition of the oft-repeated “according to its/their kind” with “in the image and likeness of God” suggests that the author was drawing a sharp distinction between humans and the other created beings. However, it also implies that just as

84. Ibid., 45.

85. The phrase “according to their kind” does not appear in Gen 1:22, but the implication is that the sea creatures and birds would respond to the command to be fruitful and multiply by reproducing their own kind.

86. See HALOT 2:577 and TDOT 8:289. To translate *lā + mîn* as “every kind,” as the NRSV and TNK do, misses the point that the plants and animals reproduce within their own species.

the plants and animals were created according to their own type, humans were made, at some level, according to *Elohim's kind*, although not literally born of God. The author could have said that God made humans according to his (God's) kind using *lā + mîn*, as he did with the plants and animals, but he did not. Rather, he expressed human similarity to the divine with *şelem* and *dəmût*. Thus, it seems that being created in the image and likeness of God is both comparable to being created “according to God's kind,” but is distinct from it. In other words, humans are not divine, nor are they members of the heavenly host. They are their own category, type, or species, which is defined by being created in the image and likeness of God. However, at some level, humans belong to the divine class or species, that is, humanity's *kind or type is God*. If indeed Genesis 1 conceives of humanity as God's “royal son,”⁸⁷ are there indications elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible that Elohim or Yahweh is understood as humanity's “divine father”?

4.5.2. *Yahweh as Father*

The notion of Yahweh as father is well attested elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible where it denotes Yahweh's relationship to corporate Israel, who is referred to explicitly as Yahweh's child. In Deut 32:6 Yahweh is named as Israel's father (*ʾāb*), who created (*qnh*), made (*ʿśh*) and established (*kwn*) them. Twice in Jeremiah, Yahweh identifies himself as Israel's father (Jer 3:19, 31:9) and elsewhere Israel is described as Yahweh's firstborn son (Exod 4:22–23, *bənī ḥəkorī*) whom he will nurse, carry, nurture, and comfort (Isa 66:12–13). Israel refers to Yahweh as father in Isa 63:16 and 64:7, and in Mal 2:10 God (*ʾēl*) is identified both as Israel's father (*ʾāb*) and as their creator (*brʾ*), indicating that Yahweh is deemed Israel's father because he created them.⁸⁸

Yahweh is also identified as the father of the Israelite king. In 2 Sam 7:14, Yahweh says in reference to David's heir, Solomon, “I will be his father (*lāʾāb*), and he will be my son (*lāḥēn*).”⁸⁹ The psalmist goes further,

87. I am using the quotation marks around “royal son” to highlight the fact that Gen 1:26–27 describes humanity as made in the image and according to the likeness of God. This is distinct from claiming that humans are the image and likeness of God.

88. For *brʾ*, see Pss 27:10, 68:6; Prov 3:12. See also Hos 2:1[1:10] and 11:1. This idea of divine parentage is also attested in Jer 2:26–28, where both the people and the leadership of Judah are condemned for considering other gods and goddesses as their parents: “As a thief is shamed when he is discovered, thus the house of Israel will be put to shame, they, their kings, their princes, and their priests and their prophets, who say to a tree (*ʿēš*), ‘You are my father (*ʾābī attāh*),’ and to a stone (*ʿēben*), ‘You gave me birth (*ʾatt yəlīdīnī*),’ 2fs Kethib with G, S. MT reads *yəlīdātānyy*.’ For they have turned [their] back to me, and not [their] face. But in the time of their trouble they will say, ‘Arise and deliver us!’ But where are your gods (*ʾēlōhēkā*) which you made for yourselves? Let them arise if they can save you in the time of your trouble. For [according to] the number of your cities are your gods (*ʾēlōhēkā*), O Judah.”

89. 2 Sam 7:14. Literally, “I myself will be a father to him (*ʾānī ʾehyeh lō lāʾāb*) and he himself will be a son to me (*wəhūʾ yihyeh lī lāḥēn*).” See also 1 Chr 28:6 and Ps 89:27–28.

using explicit birthing language⁹⁰ to define the divine-royal relationship. Yahweh proclaims to the king, “My son are you (*bānī ’attāh*). I, today, have begotten you (*yālidtika*).”⁹¹

We must keep in mind, however, that humanity (*’ādām*) is nowhere described in the Hebrew Bible explicitly as “Yahweh’s son.” However, the use of *šelem* and *dāmūt* to define the God/father-humankind/son relationship in Gen 5:3, the comparison between the plants and animals as made “according to their kinds” versus man who is made “in the image and according to the likeness of God” in Gen 1:11–27, and the connection between the Israelite king as the son of Yahweh and *’ādām* as Yahweh’s appointed king over creation in Genesis 1 may suggest that Gen 1:26–27 is defining the divine-human relationship in terms of sonship while at the same time carefully avoiding the divinization of humankind. This theory is supported not only by the biblical evidence, presented above, but it may also be reinforced by the hymn of Tukulti-Ninurta I, introduced in chapter 3, in which the Assyrian king is designated as the *šalmu* of the god Enlil.

4.5.3. Images of the Fathers: Tukulti-Ninurta I, Anu, and Ea

As noted in chapter 3, beginning with Tukulti-Ninurta I (1243–1207 B.C.E.) the divine-royal relationship in Assyria was expressed anew in terms of statue manufacture and divine birth.⁹² In the hymn from the *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic*, the king’s body is likened to “the flesh of the gods” (*šer ilāne*, line 16), a phrase known from the Erra Myth, which refers to the precious *mesu*-wood from which divine statues were made.⁹³ He was “successfully engendered through/cast into the channel of the womb of the gods” (*ina ra-a-aṭ šassuru ilāne ši-pi-ik-šu ī-te-eš-ra*) and, as a result, “He alone is the eternal image of Enlil (*šu-ú-ma šalam* ⁴*Enlil*),” whom “Enlil raised . . . like a natural father, after his first-born son” (*ú-šar-bi-šu-ma* ⁴*Enlil ki-ma a-bi a-li-di ar-ki mār bu-uk-ri-šu*).⁹⁴ The combination of birthing and manufacturing imagery is striking. Not only is Tukulti-Ninurta’s body likened to a divine statue, but the process of his creation is described both in terms of manufacture and procreation. Machinist rightly concludes that here *šalmu*

90. Without the preposition *lā* as in 2 Sam 7:14.

91. Ps 2:7. Notice that in the phrase *bānī ’attāh* the noun has been fronted and in the phrase *’anī hayyôm yālidtika* the pronoun *’anī* is unnecessary, given that the subject is contained in the verb *yālidtika*. Presumably, this was done intentionally for emphasis on the divine-royal relationship as one of father to son.

92. Machinist has demonstrated that these innovations were influenced by the royal theology of the Sumerio-Babylonian south, where the idea of divine parentage and the king as the *šalmu* of the god is present in Sumerian hymns, royal inscriptions, rituals, personal names, and legal texts. See P. Machinist, *The Epic of Tukulti-Ninurta I: A Study in Middle Assyrian Literature* (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1978), 180–208.

93. Idem, “Kingship and Divinity,” 162–63.

94. Text and translation from *ibid.*, 160–61.

identifies the physical body of the king with a divine statue.⁹⁵ However, in this context, *şalmu* may have been intended as a double entendre, referring not only to the king as a “living image” of the god but also, on some level, as Enlil’s royal son.⁹⁶ Although the hymn avoids explicit deification of the king,⁹⁷ it certainly leaves the reader with the impression that Tukulti-Ninurta I, unlike any other human being,⁹⁸ has a unique and special relationship with the god Enlil which finds its closest analogy in sonship.⁹⁹

The opening lines of the Babylonian creation story *Enūma Eliš* reinforce the idea that image and likeness related terms can be used in reference to offspring. The account begins with the creation of the primordial gods: Apsū and Tīpamat beget Laḫmu, Laḫāmu, Anshar, and Kishar. Anshar and Kishar then beget their firstborn son, Anu, who is described as the *muššulu* (*ú-maš-šil-ma*) of his father.¹⁰⁰ This term refers to likeness and, by extension, a mirror, and may possibly mean “replica” and “representation.”¹⁰¹ The following line reads, “and Anu begot Nudimmud,¹⁰² his image” (*ù^da-num tam-ši-la-šú ú-lid^d nu-dím-mud*).¹⁰³ Both examples define the father-son relationship in terms of image and likeness: Anu is the *muššulu* of his father Anshar, and Ea is the *tamšilu*, the “likeness, effigy, replica, image, resemblance, counterpart, or equivalent,”¹⁰⁴ of his father, Anu. What this demonstrates is that terms of likeness and resemblance were used in Assyria as early as the mid-late 13th century B.C.E. to define the relationship of a god to his royal or divine son.¹⁰⁵

In a Tenth Dynasty wisdom text from Egypt, however, it is *humanity in general* that is defined both as the image and the offspring of the creator-

95. Ibid., 163.

96. Note, however, that the notion of the divine sonship of the king dates back to the late third millennium B.C.E. in the Babylonian south. See *ibid.*, 163 and n. 38.

97. His body is “reckoned with (*ma-ni it-ti*) the flesh of the gods” but it is not explicitly said to be made of divine flesh. His name is written *without* the divine prefix, *dingir*, and Enlil is not the father but is described as “like (*ki-ma*) a natural father.” These observations were made by Machinist, who then concludes, “All of these suggest, in sum, a certain hesitation on the part of Tukulti-Ninurta and his scribes as to the full deification of kings that at least the late third and early second millennia of Babylonian history offered. Evidently, the pull of a more conservative tradition . . . was still strong” (*ibid.*, 163–64).

98. As Machinist notes, the language of divine sonship in Assyria was, with very rare exception, exclusively reserved for the king. See *ibid.*, 168.

99. The notion that the king was born of and/or nurtured by the gods continued to appear in Assyrian royal texts long after Tukulti-Ninurta I’s death and in first-millennium B.C.E. royal texts from Babylonia. See *ibid.*, 166–69.

100. Tablet 1 line 15. See P. Talon, *The Standard Babylonian Creation Myth Enūma Eliš: Introduction, Cuneiform Text, Transliteration, and Sign List with a Translation and Glossary in French* (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2005) 33.

101. See CAD M/2 281.

102. Another name for Ea.

103. Talon, *The Standard Babylonian Creation Myth*, 33 line 16.

104. CAD T 147–49.

105. On the theme of the divine sonship of the king in Neo-Assyrian royal texts, see Machinist, *Kingship and Divinity*, 166–69.

god. The relevant portion of the text, known as “The Instructions for Merikare,” reads:

(Well) provided is humankind, the cattle of the god. It was for their sake that he made heaven and earth and repelled the ‘greed’ of the waters. And it was so that their nostrils might live (breathe) that he made the winds. *They are his images which have come forth from his body*, and he shines in heaven for their sake. It is for them that he made plants, cattle, birds and fish (to) nourish them.¹⁰⁶

The term translated “images,” *snw*, originates from a word meaning “second,” hence “likeness, image.”¹⁰⁷ As James Hoffmeier has noted, it is often written with the determinative for statue as in Papyrus Carlsberg VI of Merikare.¹⁰⁸

4.5.4. Interpretation of *šelem* and *dəmût* in Genesis 1:26–27

The cumulative evidence from Gen 5:1–3, 9:5–6 and 1:11–27, from the various texts that identify Yahweh as the father of Israel and the Israelite king, and from the selective extrabiblical examples from the *Tukulti Ninurta Epic*, *Enūma Eliš*, and “The Instructions for Merikare,” demonstrate that image and likeness terminology was indeed used in the ancient Near East to define the relationship between a god and his offspring as one of sonship. Further, the hymn from the *Tukulti Ninurta* epic and the “Instructions for Merikare” show that the terms could be used as double entendres in which the relationship between god and king (in the case of *Tukulti Ninurta*), or creator-god and humanity (in the case of *Merikare*), was framed *both* as image/statue *and* son/child. I suggest, therefore, this is how these terms are functioning in Genesis 1. That is, the nature of the divine-human relationship as it is presented in Genesis 1 has three major components that are intimately related to one another: kinship, kingship, and cult. At some level, humans seem to be members of the divine species, which implies “bi-

106. The translation is from p. 131–32 in David Lorton, “God’s Beneficent Creation: Coffin Texts Spell 1130, the Instructions for Merikare, and the Great Hymn to the Aton,” *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 20 (1993) 125–55. See also James Hoffmeier, “Some Thoughts on Genesis 1 and 2 and Egyptian Cosmology,” *JANES* 15 (1983) 39–49, esp. p. 47. The text is published in L. Borchardt, “Zwei Schriftproben,” *Allerhand Kleinigkeiten* (Leipzig: Privatdruck, 1933), 43–45; A. Volten, *Zwei Altägyptische politische Schriften: Die Lehre für König Merikare (Pap. Carlsberg VI) und Die Lehre des König Amenemhet* (Analecta Aegyptiaca 4; Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1945); W. Helck, *Die Lehre für König Merikare* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1977); and J. F. Quack, *Studien zur Lehre für Merikare* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992).

107. A. Erman and H. Grapow, *Wörterbuch der Ägyptischen Sprache* (7 vols.; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1926–61), 4:149. R. O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1962) 232.

108. Hoffmeier, “Some Thoughts,” 47. The Papyrus Carlsberg VI of Merikare dates to the New Kingdom (Dynasty XVIII).

ological relationship,” metaphorically speaking, to God, and specifically, sonship. Genesis 1 uses the terms *ṣelem* and *dāmût* to express this intimate, filial relationship, similar to the way they are used in Gen 5:1–3, where Adam begets a son, Seth, “in his own likeness and after his image.”¹⁰⁹ But clearly, *‘ādām* is not a divine being, as indicated by the prepositions *bə* and *kə* in Gen 1:26–27.¹¹⁰

A result of being Elohim’s “son” is that humanity is also king ruling at God’s behest as his representative. In Genesis 1, this is expressed most clearly by God’s commission to the first human pair in Gen 1:28 to fill (*ml’*) the earth and to subdue (*kbš*) and rule over (*rdh*) creation.¹¹¹ It is also implied by the fact that being created in the image of God carries with it the responsibility to represent God and his standards in the realm of law and justice, as in Gen 9:6.

We cannot ignore, however, that *ṣelem* can also designate a cult statue. Given the context of Gen 1:1–2:3—the creation of God’s macro-temple (the world), which includes the creation of humanity—*ṣelem* in Gen 1:26–27 may have been intended as a double entendre referring both to sonship and to humanity to as a royal “statuette” of God designed to manifest his presence in the world. If so, Genesis 1 democratizes the royal-divine designation of *ṣelem* to all of *‘ādām* (humanity).

109. I am not suggesting that kinship is implied in every occurrence of *ṣelem* and/or *dāmût* (see §4.3, above), but only that *in the context of birth and creation*, these terms (and their synonyms) are relational. Hence, in Gen 1:26–27, *ṣelem* and *dāmût* define humanity’s identity in relation to God as a child to its father/parent. Humanity’s function—the royal commission to rule and have dominion over the earth and creation—comes as a result of being the child of the Creator, Elohim. In short, in Gen 1, as in Gen 5:1, 3, it is the relational aspect of *ṣelem* and *dāmût* that is primary, contra Herring (*Divine Substitution*, 117, 122 n. 198). The functional aspect of these terms in Gen 1 is *derived from or grounded in* humanity’s identity as a child of God, and it is, therefore, secondary. Despite his denial that *ṣelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1 are genealogical, Herring then goes on to demonstrate that these terms in Gen 1 are indeed concerned with progeny. See Herring, *Divine Substitution*, 120, 122.

110. We should not understand the *beth* in *bəṣelem* as, or perhaps, only as, the *bet essentiae*, “as, serving as.” If the relational aspect of *ṣelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27 is primary, then we must understand the *beth* in *bəṣelem* either as the preposition *in* or perhaps as part of the double entendre of *ṣelem* and *dāmût*. Gen 1 describes humanity as created *in* God’s image, that is, *as his child*, but the same *beth* may also signify that humans are created to serve *as* God’s image, that is, to rule over creation on his behalf. It does not seem, however, that the *beth* in *bəṣelem* refers *only* to the latter, as many have argued. See Herring, *Divine Substitution*, 118 and n. 179).

111. These commands recall the *šangûtu* of the Assyrian king. Machinist comments, “this *šangûtu* is linked to the fundamental duty of the king/*šangû*: to enlarge the territory of the realm—the quintessential imperial act” (“Kingship and Divinity,” 159). Thus, not only the state but the entire empire is considered Aššur’s holy kingdom which is governed by the divinely appointed human king,” and further, “Aššur remains the real and ultimate king; the human king is, then, his servant, mediator, administrative representative, responsible for the god’s earthly possessions—a role that can be designated, depending, we may suppose, on the angle of vision chosen, as *šangû*, *iššakku*, or *šaknu*” (ibid., 157).

4.6. The Concepts of *Şelem* and *Dāmût* in Genesis 2:5–3:24?

I concluded above that *şelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27 were used to describe the creation of humankind because the author was likening the divine-human relationship to that of father and son. In doing so, he was also redefining *şelem*: the divine is not manifest in a human-made statue. Rather, *şelem* denotes a living human being.¹¹² A close reading of Gen 2:5–3:24 reveals that, although the terms *şelem* and *dāmût* are absent, the themes of kinship, kingship, and cult are present in the Eden story, as well.

4.6.1. Kinship in Genesis 2:5–3:24

Kinship in Genesis 1 was expressed as a father-son relationship between God and humankind. In Genesis 2, the theme of kinship is manifest in the relationship between husband and wife. Adam found no suitable companion among the animals, so Yahweh formed (*bnh*) woman out of Adam's own body, rather than from the dust (*ʿāpār*) of which Adam was made or from the earth (*ʾādāmāh*) from which Yahweh created the animals. This established Eve not only as a fitting counterpart¹¹³ but as Adam's true, biologically related kin, which he acknowledged when he exclaimed, "This time, the bone of my bones (*ʿešem mēʿāšāmā*) and the flesh of my flesh (*ūḥāšār mibbāšārī*), this one shall be called woman because from man this one was taken."

That Adam was expressing his genuine kinship with Eve by acknowledging her as his very bone and flesh is suggested by the five other attestations of "my bone and my flesh" in the Hebrew Bible.¹¹⁴ In Gen 29:14, the first meeting of Jacob with his maternal uncle, Laban, Laban says to him (Jacob), "Surely you are my bone and my flesh (*ʿašmī ūḥāšārī ʾāttāh*)."

When Abimelech addresses his mother's family concerning his desire to become king (Judg 9:2–3), he urges them, "Speak now, in the hearing of all the leaders of Shechem, 'Which is better for you, that 70 men, all the sons of Jerubbaal, rule over you, or that one man rule over you?' Also, remember that I am your bone and your flesh (*ʿašmēkem ūḥāšarkem ʾānī*)."

The text continues, "And his mother's relatives spoke all these words on his behalf in the hearing of all the leaders of Shechem, and they were inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said, 'He is our brother/relative' (*ʾāḥīnū ḥū*)."

112. Regarding the contrast between the *şalamîm* in Canaan that Israel is commanded to destroy and the *şalamîm* God creates in Gen 1, Herring concludes, "Valid manifestation of divine presence is not found in consecrated wood, stone, or metal. Rather, humankind is the *locus* of divine presence and, as such, it should be highly cherished" (*Divine Substitution*, 123).

113. Hebrew *ʿezer kənegdô*, "a helper as his counterpart." Eve was a fitting counterpart because, unlike the animals, she was made from Adam's own body; that is, she and Adam were of the same bone and flesh.

114. See also the use of *bāšār* ("flesh") to indicate kinship in Gen 37:27; Lev 18:6; 25:49; and Neh 5:5; with Cross, "Kinship and Covenant," 3–4.

2 Sam 5:1 and the parallel in 1 Chr 11:1, the tribes of Israel demonstrate their solidarity with David, their new king, by claiming, “We are your bone and your flesh (‘aşmākā ûḥāsārākā ’ānāḥanū).”

Our final example is from 2 Sam 19:11–14:

Then King David sent to Zadok and Abiathar the priests saying, “Speak to the elders of Judah saying, ‘Why are you the last to bring the king back to his house, since the word of all Israel has come to the king, even to his house? You are my brothers (ʾaḥā ’attem), you are my bone and my flesh (‘aşmî ûḥāsārî ’attem). Why then should you be the last to bring back the king?’ Say to Amasa, ‘Are you not my bone and my flesh (ḥâlô’ ʾaşmî ûḥāsārî ’attāh)? May God do so to me, and more also, if you will not be commander of the army before me continually in the place of Joab.’” Thus he turned the hearts of all the men of Judah as *one man* (wayyaʿt ʿet ləḥab kol ʾiṣ yəḥūḏah kəʾiṣ ʿeḥaḏ), so that they sent [word] to the king saying, “Return, you and all your servants.”

In each case, the relationship and the inherent obligations of devotion and loyalty are defined by actual blood ties. Laban is obliged to Jacob, Abimelech’s family is obliged to him, and Amasa, the son of David’s sister, Abigail, and the elders of Judah¹¹⁵ are bound to David because of their actual or perceived biologically based kinship. Thus “becoming one flesh” in Gen 2:24 seems to be, primarily, an expression of Adam and Eve’s biologically based kinship bond,¹¹⁶ even if, in the context of Genesis 1, it may refer to sexual intimacy and the bond that results therefrom.¹¹⁷

4.6.2. Kingship in Genesis 2:5–3:24

Adam’s role as a gardener in Genesis 2 may be a sign of his royal status. In Mesopotamian royal ideology, the king, who could be referred to specifically as “gardener” (NU-KIRI₆/nukaribbu) and “farmer, cultivator” (ENGAR/ikkaru), was responsible for tending the royal and sacred gardens¹¹⁸ and for

115. According to 1 Chr 2:16–17, Amasa was the son of David’s sister, Abigail. See R. D. Nelson, “Amasa,” in *ABD* 1:182). Whether the elders were actual blood relations to David or simply called so by custom.

116. Note that, in the five other occurrences of “my bone and my flesh” in the Hebrew Bible, the union is not sexual. Cross comments on Gen 2:24, “Flesh refers not to carnal union but to identity of ‘flesh,’ kinship, ‘bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh,’” (“Kinship and Covenant,” 8).

117. G. Hugenberger comments, “it appears likely that ‘they become one flesh’ refers to the familial bondedness of marriage which finds its quintessential expression in sexual union” (*Marriage as a Covenant: A Study of Biblical Law and Ethics Governing Marriage, Developed From the Perspective of Malachi* [Leiden: Brill, 1994] 163). See also J. Skinner, *Genesis* (2nd ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1930), 70; Sarna, *Genesis*, 23; and M. Gilbert, “‘Un seule chair’ (Gn 2,24),” *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 100 (1978): 66–89, as cited in Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant*, 161 n. 148 and 162 n. 155.

118. NU-KIRI₆/nukaribbu: See CAD N/2 323–27; and G. Widengren, *The King and the Tree of Life in Ancient Near Eastern Religion* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1951), 1–19. ENGAR/ikkaru: See CAD I–J 49–55; and D. Callender, *Adam in Myth and History: Ancient*

harvesting rare trees and plants from conquered countries and cultivating them within his own kingdom.¹¹⁹ According to the Neo-Babylonian Sargon Chronicle, Irra-imitti, king of Isin, “installed Bel-ibni, the gardener, on his throne as a ‘substitute king’ and . . . placed his own royal crown on his (i.e., Bel-ibni’s) head.”¹²⁰ At Irra-mitti’s death, Bel-ibni, “was elevated to (real) kingship.”¹²¹ In the Legend of Sargon, after the Assyrian king was rescued from a river and reared by the gardener, Aqqi, Sargon claims, “Aqqi, the gardener, assigned me to gardening for him. While I was gardening, Ishtar granted me her love, and for four and . . . years I exercised kingship.”¹²² Furthermore, the kings of Mesopotamia were frequently referred to as the “provider of abundance (ḥe₂.gal₂, *ḥegallu*) for the land,” an epithet especially well attested for Neo-Assyrian kings.¹²³ Sargon II referred to himself as “he who amasses plenty, prosperity and abundance” (*mukammir ṭuḥḍi ḥegalli*) and Sennacherib boasts that he “provides abundance and prosperity in the fields of Assyria” (*šakin nuḥši u ṭuḥḍi ina uḡāri māAššur*).¹²⁴ As Winter observes, these references refer specifically to agricultural bounty.¹²⁵

The role of the king as gardener *par excellence* is also attested in the Hebrew Bible, where the king of Jerusalem (Eccl 1:12) claims:

I built houses and planted vineyards for myself (*nāta‘tî lî kārāmîm*). I made for myself gardens and parks (*gannôt ûpārdēsîm*), and I planted in them all kinds of fruit trees (*wānāta‘tî bahem ‘eš kol perî*). I made for myself pools of water (*bārēkôt māyim*) from which to water the forest of growing trees (*ya‘ar šômēaḥ ‘ešîm*). (Eccl 2:4b–6)

Thus, Adam’s placement in the garden of Eden and his assignment to work and keep it (*‘bd* and *šmr* in Gen 2:15) may be an indication of his kingship. Callender comments, “Just as Yahweh is responsible for the creation and maintenance of such fertility, so is the king. The J image of gardening is a royal image.”¹²⁶

Adam’s royal status is further indicated in Gen 2:15 where he is installed (*nwh*) in the garden of Eden “to work it and guard it (*lā‘obdāh ûlāšomrāh*).”

Israelite Perspectives on the Primal Human (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000a), 61, 62. *Tending the gardens*: See Widengren, *The King*, esp. chap. 1, where he notes that the Mesopotamian king was guardian of the gods’ gardens.

119. Callender, *Adam in Myth and History*, 59–65; I. Winter, “Ornament and the ‘Rhetoric of Abundance’ in Assyria,” *Eretz-Israel 27* (2003): 252–64, esp. p. 252 and n. 3.

120. *Ibid.*, 62–63; ANET 267.

121. *Ibid.*, 63; ANET 267. See also L. W. King, *Chronicles Concerning Early Babylonian Kings* (London: Luzac, 1907), 64.

122. J. Tigay, *The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic* (Wauconda: Bolchazy-Carducci, 2002), 254. See also L. W. King, *Chronicles Concerning Early Babylonian Kings* (London: Luzac, 1907) 63.

123. CAD H 167–68; Winter, “Ornament,” 252.

124. *Ibid.*, 252 and n. 1.

125. *Ibid.*, 252.

126. Callender, *Adam in Myth and History*, 62.

In §4.7.3 below, I will discuss the merit of *nwh* as a designation for the installation of divine and royal images.¹²⁷ Regarding *‘bd* and *šmr*, however, the only other place in the Hebrew Bible aside from Gen 2:15 where these verbs appear together is in Num 3:7–8, 8:26, and 18:5–6, where they describe the duty of the Levites in guarding and ministering at the tabernacle. Thus, the use of *‘bd* and *šmr* to describe Adam’s work in the garden of Eden suggests that he functioned not only as an administrator of the kingdom but also, on some level, as a royal priest of Yahweh’s “sanctuary” in Eden.¹²⁸ This idea is not without precedent in the ancient Near East. One of the titles borne by Assyrian kings was *šangû*, a term that denotes the king’s role as the divinely appointed chief priest who participates in rituals and is responsible for the provision and maintenance of all the sanctuaries in his jurisdiction.¹²⁹ This dual office is also well attested in earlier Sumerian royal hymns and inscriptions in which the king was appointed as the high priest of his domain.¹³⁰

4.6.3. Adam as an “Image” in Genesis 2:5–3:24? The Eden Story Revisited

In the previous two chapters we have considered Gen 2:5–3:24, the *mīs pî pîṭ pî*, and the *wpt-r* on their own. Thus far, in the current chapter we have examined the meaning of *şelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27 and determined that *şelem* was used to describe the creation of humanity because, unlike *bēn* (son) or *melek* (king), *şelem* alone conveyed three fundamental aspects of what it means to be human: (1) humans, unlike the other created beings, were designed to be in a filial relationship with God, (2) humans were created to rule over creation, and (3) humans, rather than statues, are the “images” who were created to dwell in the divine presence. In what follows, I will seek to demonstrate that, like Gen 1:26–27, the Eden story is interested in the idea of man as created *bāşelem* *‘ēlōhîm*, despite the absence of *şelem* and *dāmût* from the story. Our discussion will not be exhaustive. Rather, the features I have selected for comment, and which I will discuss and explain in the context of Gen 2:5–3:24 as a whole, are those that exhibit similarities to the divine statue animation rituals with which we are

127. See §4.7.3.

128. For the garden of Eden as the “temple” of Yahweh, see §4.7.1.

129. For example, the late Neo-Assyrian inscription of Sin-šar-iškun describes him as the one “whom they (the gods) commanded to exercise provision for all the shrines, *šangûtu* for all the sanctuaries (and) shepherdship (for . . .).” See Machinist, “Kingship and Divinity,” 156, which cites M. J. Seux, *Epithetes: Royales akkadiennes et sumeriennes* (Paris: Letouzey et Ane, 1967), 228–29; and G. van Driel, *Cult of Aššur* (Assen: van Gorcum, 1969), 173.

130. See J. Klein, “The Coronation and Consecration of Šulgi in the Ekur (Šulgi G)” in *Ah, Assyria . . . Studies in Assyrian History and Ancient Near Eastern Historiography Presented to Hayim Tadmor* (ed. Mordechai Cogan and Israel Eph’al; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1991), 292–313, esp. pp. 296, 304, 305 lines 49–53; and 298 n. 31.

now familiar from our study of the Washing of the Mouth and Opening of the Mouth rituals in chapter 3. These features are the establishment of the garden of Eden in Gen 2:8–14; the potential installation (*nwhi*) of Adam in the garden in Gen 2:15; the nakedness of Adam and Eve in Gen 2:25 versus their “crowning” in Ps 8:5; and the opening of their eyes in Gen 3:5, 7. Whether or not the Eden author had direct knowledge of the *mīs pī pīt pī* and/or the *wpt-r*, the creation of humanity in Gen 2:5–3:24 reflects, as we will see, similar ideas about the formation, animation, and installation of royal and divine images, as in the Mesopotamian and Egyptian rituals. Below, I will attempt to demonstrate that the Eden story exhibits these similarities. However, we will not ignore the differences among the three texts. The Eden story is, after all, an account of human creation, not a liturgy for the creation of a god. It will be important, thus, to examine both the parallels and differences between the texts. Further, I will consider the question of *why* the author would have applied these ideas to his story of human origins and what statement he seems to have been making about the divine-human relationship.

4.7. The Eden Story in Light of the Washing of the Mouth and Opening of the Mouth Rituals

4.7.1. Genesis 2:8–14

8²: וַיִּטַע יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים גֶּן-בְּעֶדֶן מִקְדָּם וַיִּשֶׂם שֵׁם אֶת-הָאֲדָם אֲשֶׁר יָצָר: 9²: וַיַּצְמַח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִן-הָאֲדָמָה כָּל-עֵץ נֹחֵמָד לְמִרְאֵה וְטוֹב לְמַאֲכֹל וְעֵץ הַחַיִּים בְּתוֹךְ הָגֶן וְעֵץ הָרָעָה טוֹב וְרָע: 10²: וַנְּהַר יֵצֵא מֵעֵדֶן לְהַשְׁקִית אֶת-הָגֶן וּמִשָּׁם יִפְרֹד וְהָיָה לָאֲרָבָעָה רְאשִׁים: 11²: שֵׁם הָאֲחָד פִּישׁוֹן הוּא הַסָּבִב אֶת כָּל-אֶרֶץ הַחֲוִילָה אֲשֶׁר-שָׁם הַזָּהָב: 12²: וְהָיָב הָאֶרֶץ הַהוּא טוֹב שֵׁם הַבְּדֵלֶח וְאָבֵן הַשֹּׁהַם: 13²: וְשֵׁם-הַנְּהָר הַשֵּׁנִי גִיחוֹן הוּא הַסּוֹבֵב אֶת כָּל-אֶרֶץ כּוּשׁ: 14²: וְשֵׁם הַנְּהָר הַשְּׁלִישִׁי תִּדְקֵל הוּא הַהֹלֵךְ קִדְמַת אֲשׁוּר וְהַנְּהָר הָרְבִיעִי הוּא פָּרָת:

8 Yahweh Elohim planted a garden in Eden in the east¹³¹ and put there the man whom he had formed. 9 Then Yahweh Elohim caused to sprout from the earth all kinds of trees desirable in appearance and good for food.¹³² The tree of life was in the midst of the garden and (also) the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. 10 A river flowed¹³³ out from Eden to

131. The preposition *bə* suggests that the garden was located within the larger area of Eden. The Hebrew term *miqqedem* can refer to “ancient times,” as it does in Neh 12:46; Ps 74:12; 77:6, 12; and 143:5. This would be appropriate in the context of Gen 2. However, the LXX renders *miqqedem* as *kata anatólas*, “eastward” (see Isa 9:11). If “of old, from the beginning” was intended, the LXX presumably would have translated *miqqedem* in Gen 2:8 with *prò aiōnos*, “from the beginning,” as it does in Ps 73:12 (MT Ps 74:12), with *ap’ archēs*, as it does in Hab 1:12; Mic 5:1; Isa 45:21; Ps 76:12 (*apò tēs archēs*, MT 77:12); or as *archaias*, as it does in Ps 76:6 (MT 77:6) and Ps 143:5 (*archaiōn*, MT 142:5). See also *miqqedem* as “east” in Gen 3:24; 11:2; 12:8; 13:11; Ezek 11:23; and HALOT 3:1069–70. Further, the text has already indicated in Gen 2:5–6 that this story is set in primeval time.

132. The description suggests an orchard of fruit trees.

133. On the translation of the participle as a durative, see Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar*, 121h.

water the garden and from there it divided and became four headwaters. 11 The name of the first¹³⁴ was Pishon. It went around all the land of Havilah, where there is gold.¹³⁵ 12 And the gold of that land is good. Bdel-
 lium and šoham¹³⁶ are there. 13 The name of the second river was Gihon. It went around all the land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river was Tigris. It flows to the east of Ashur. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

After Yahweh Elohim created the man he planted a garden in Eden in which to place (*šym*) him. The garden was filled with beautiful, fruit-laden trees¹³⁷ that were watered by a river going out from Eden in the direction of the four cardinal points. Indeed it was a land of pleasure or delight, as its name indicates and as it is described elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible.¹³⁸ Why was the creation of humankind associated with the establishment of a garden? The answer may lie in the setting for the *mīs pī pīt pī* ritual. Although in the *mīs pī pīt pī* the construction and animation of the divine image began in the craftsmen’s workshop,¹³⁹ most of the vivifying acts occurred in a verdant and fruit-filled temple garden (*kirû*). The opening of the eyes is implied in both versions of the *mīs pī pīt pī* by the positioning of the statue with “its eyes toward sunrise” (*inēšu ana šīt šamši tašakkamma*).¹⁴⁰ In the Babylon version, the priest is directed specifically to “open the eye of that god” (*in ili šuāti tepette*).¹⁴¹ Its mouth and ears are opened while in the garden, as well. The priest recites the incantation “Ea, Shamash, and Asalluhi,”¹⁴² which implores the god to “ceremoniously grant him the

134. Literally, “the one.” For “one” in the determinative sense, see *ibid.*, 142m.

135. With nouns of place, prepositions with a retrospective pronoun are frequently replaced with the adverb *šām*, “the land of Havilah where (*šām*) there is gold.” See *ibid.*, 158j.

136. Bdelium is a transliteration of the Greek *bdellion* and Hebrew בדרלת. It may be an aromatic resin or a precious stone. See Akkadian *budulhu* in CAD B 305–6. The Hebrew term *šoham* is usually translated as “onyx” in most English Bibles, but its precise identification is unknown; the term was, apparently, unfamiliar to the LXX translators, who rendered *šoham* in Gen 2:12 with the generic *lithos*, “stone” or “precious stone,” and with *lithos smaragdou* and *lithos tēs smaragdou* (emeralds or other green stones) in Exod 28:9 and 39:6 (LXX 36:13), respectively. We do know, however, that the *šoham* was a rare and expensive precious stone used to decorate the tabernacle and temple (Exod 25:7; 1 Chr 29:2), the priestly garments (Exod 28:9, 20; 35:27; 39:6, 13) and the covering (*māsukātekā*) of the king of Tyre in Ezek 28:13. See also Job 28:16.

137. See Ezek 31:8–9.

138. See the use of *‘dn* in 2 Sam 1:24; Jer 52:34; Ps 36:9; and Neh 9:25. See A. R. Millard, “The Etymology of Eden,” VT 34 (1984): 103–6, R. S. Hess, “Eden: A Well Watered Place,” BR 7 (1991): 28–33; and A. R. Millard and P. Bordreuil, “A Statue from Syria with Assyrian and Aramaic Inscriptions,” BA 45 (1982): 135–41. The statue and its inscription were first published in Ali Abou-Assaf, *La statue de Tell Fekherye et son inscription bilingue assyro-araméenne* (Paris: Recherches sur les civilisations, 1982). Gen 13:10; Isa 51:3; Ezek 31:9, 16, 18; Ezek 36:35; Joel 2:3.

139. The statue is addressed directly while still in the workshop, indicating that it could “hear.” See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 57 lines 61–63.

140. *Ibid.*, 59 line 97 and n. 82; 71, 74, and 78 line 13a.

141. *Ibid.*, 73, 76, and 80 line 53.

142. *Ibid.*, 63 line 144.

destiny that his mouth may eat, that his ears might hear (*šim-tu ra-biṣ šima-šú pi-i-šú ana ma-ka-le-e ú-šu-un-šú a-na niš-mé-e liš-ša-k[in]*).¹⁴³ Later, the priest exclaims, “He (Ea) has prepared your mouth for eating (*pi-i-ka ana ma-ka-li iš-kun*)!”¹⁴⁴ The god is now ready to enjoy offerings of food and drink that include the “celestial evening meal” (*únu kin-sig an-na-ke₄*) that the priests will serve to the divine statue once it is installed in its temple.¹⁴⁵ Prior to leaving the garden, the priest whispers messages into both of the statue’s ears, demonstrating further that its hearing is now functioning.¹⁴⁶ Another incantation recited while in the garden includes the acknowledgement that “this statue cannot smell incense without the ‘Opening of the Mouth’ ceremony, it cannot eat food nor drink water (*ša¹-lam¹ an-nu-ú ina la pi-it pi-i qut-ri-in-na ul iš-ši-in a-ka-la ul ik-kal me-e ul i-šat-ti*).”¹⁴⁷ Thus, not only were the eyes, ears, and mouth activated, but the nose was now operative. Winter comments that this incantation in particular “makes absolutely clear the process of enlivening effected by the mouth-opening ritual and the animate presence henceforth in the image.”¹⁴⁸ Finally, the exclamation “May the temple where you (the god) walk be open! (*É tal-l[ak-t]i-ka lu-ú p[e]-‘ti’*),”¹⁴⁹ which was recited as part of the incantation “Statue born in heaven” (*én alam an-na [ù]-[tu-ud-da]*) prior to leaving the garden, demonstrates that the “god” can now, in conception, walk on its own. In sum, although the creation and animation of the divine statue began in the craftsmen’s workshop, its sensory organs and its body as a whole were animated more fully in the temple garden. As Schüle notes, “The different commentaries on the *mis pî* ritual agree that *the garden* is actually the central place for the completion of the image.”¹⁵⁰

The *mis pî pî pî* texts offer few details concerning the cultic gardens in which the mouth-washing and opening ceremony was performed. Two Akkadian texts, however, provide brief descriptions of the garden of the Apsû in the *E-kar-zaġinna*, Ea’s riverside temple complex in Babylon, which hosted the *mis pî pî pî* ritual on at least two occasions.¹⁵¹ In the first, the

143. That is, grant to the statue (*alam/šalmu*). Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 134 and 149 lines 36–37.

144. Ibid., 163 and 184 line 19ab.

145. Ibid., 77 and 81 line 61; 179 and 187 line 41ab.

146. Ibid., 65 lines 164–72; 146–47 and 152–53 lines 6–10, 14, and n. 71.

147. Ibid., 140–41, and 151 lines 70ab–71ab.

148. Winter, *Idols of the King*, 23.

149. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 165 and 185 line 41ab.

150. A. Schüle, “Made in the ‘Image of God’: The Concepts of Divine Images in Gen 1–3.” *ZAW* 117 (2005): 1–20, esp. 12. On the importance of the garden setting see also A. Berlejung, *Die Theologie der Bilder: Herstellung und Einweihung von Kultbildern in Mesopotamien und die alttestamentliche Bilderpolemik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1998), 214 and n.1946.

151. Regrettably, the Garden of the Apsû was not found in the excavations of Babylon. This was due in large part to the limits imposed on the excavation by the rising water table (see R. Koldewey, *The Excavations at Babylon* [London: Macmillan, 1914] 4, 18, 36,

Assyrian king Ashurbanipal refers to the mouth-washing ritual, which took place “in the orchards of the gardens of luxuriance of Kar-zaginna” (*ina šip-pat mu-ša-ri-e ku-uz-bi ša kar-zagin-na*).¹⁵² In the second text, Esarhaddon’s “Renewal of the Gods,” the Assyrian king asserts:

ina qé-reb ká.dingir.ra^{ki} āl <tak>-bit-ti-šú-[un] ḥa-diš ú-še-rib-šú-nu-ti i-na šip-pat^{giv} kirî palgi mu-šar-e šá é.kar.zag. in.na ás-ri el-li ina ši-pir apkalli mīs pī pīt pī rim-ki te-lil-te ma-ḥar kakka[bE^{mes} šá-ma-mi^{é-a} dšá-maš^a asal-lú-[hi] bēlet-ilī (dingir.maḥ) d^akú-sú d^anin-girim [d^anin-kur-ra d^anin-á-gal d^akú-sig¹⁷-bān-da d^anin-īldu d^anin-zadim] e-ru-bu

I made them (the exiled gods) enter anew¹⁵³ into Babylon, the city of their veneration, and they entered through the orchards, groves, canals and gardens of E-kar-zaginna, the Pure Place, with the craft of the Sage,¹⁵⁴ mouth-washing and mouth-opening ceremonies, bathing and cleansing, into the presence of the Stars of Heaven, Ea, Šamaš, Asalluḫi, Bēlet-ilī, Kusu, Ningirimma, Ninkurra, Ninagal, Kusigbanda, Ninildu and Ninzadim.¹⁵⁵

Finally, a Late Babylonian gate list (BM 35046) mentions two gates that provided access to the Garden of the Apsû: Ka-id, “Gate of the River God,” and Ka-kiri-abzu, “Gate of the Garden of the Apsû.”¹⁵⁶ The latter was further identified in the gate list as *bābu^r šá^a pāt(KA) il^{mes} ippette^aā(BAD)^{te-a}*, “the gate (at) which the mouths of the gods are opened.”¹⁵⁷ A. R. George remarks that this is “an obvious reference to the *pīt pī* ritual, and an indication that the mention of gardens in Esarhaddon’s and Ashurbanipal’s

40, 173, 239, 242, 311). See the gardens adjacent to the *akitu* house used in the New Year’s festival in Ashur in W. Andrae, *Das Wiedererstandene Assur* (Munich: Beck, 1977), 62–67 and figs. 42–45. This garden in Assur, which surrounded the Akitu House, is described in an Assyrian poem, “The Underworld Vision of an Assyrian Prince,” as “a garden of abundance, the likeness of Mount Lebanon” (*el-le-ti ša GIŠ.SAR HÉ.NUN tam-šil KUR.lab-na-na*, in A. Livingstone, *Court Poetry and Literary Miscellanea* [Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 1989] 74 line 24). For more on sacred gardens in Mesopotamia, see S. M. Dalley, “Mesopotamia, Ancient,” in *The Oxford Companion to Gardens* (ed. Geoffrey and Susan Jellicoe; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 368–70; S. Dalley, “Ancient Mesopotamian Gardens and the Identification of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon Resolved,” *Garden History* 21 (1993): 1–13; W. Andrae, “Der kultische Garten,” *Die Welt des Orients* 1 (1952): 485–94; D. J. Wiseman, “Mesopotamian Gardens,” *Anatolian Studies* 33 (1983): 137–44; L. Stager, “Jerusalem and the Garden of Eden,” *Eretz-Israel* 26 (1999): 183–94; and D. Stornach, “The Royal Gardens at Pasargadae: Evolution and Legacy,” in *Archaeologia Iranica et Orientalis* (ed. D. Meyer and E. Haerincx; Ghent: Peeters, 1989), 475–95.

152. M. Streck, *Assurbanipal und die letzten assyrischen Könige bis zum Untergange Niniveh’s* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1916), 2:268 line 19.

153. “I brought back” in George, *Babylonian Topographical Texts*, 302.

154. Idem, *Babylonian Topographical Texts* (Leuven: Peeters and Departement Orientalistiek, 1992), 302.

155. R. Borger, *Die Inschriften Asarhaddons Königs von Assyrien* (AfOB 9; Graz, 1956), no. 57, p. 89 lines 21–24. Reprinted and translated in George, *Babylonian Topographical Texts*, 302.

156. The gate lists of E-sagil are published in *ibid.*, 83–98.

157. *Ibid.*, line 27; 95 line 27.

inscription is not circumstantial. Evidently the Garden of the Apsû played an important part in these ceremonies.”¹⁵⁸

Ea’s/Enki’s temple garden was a particularly appropriate locale for the mouth-washing and mouth-opening ceremony. Not only was he resident and king of the Apsû,¹⁵⁹ of which the Garden of the Apsû was a part, but he was associated with purification, fertility, birth, construction, arts and crafts, and creation.¹⁶⁰ Thus, he possessed all the requisite skills necessary for the manufacture and ritual birth of divine images. This also explains why the *mīs pî pî pî* took place in his garden. “The choice of Ea’s temple as the site of these rituals,” George comments, “is clearly owed to his skill in matters of creation, and to the proficiency of the gods of his circle in fashioning raw materials into the finished article.”¹⁶¹ This is confirmed by two first-millennium B.C.E. texts that refer to the washing and opening of the mouth for a divine statue. The first is a mid-9th-century inscription from the reign of the Babylonian king Nabû-apla-iddina, in which the king commissions a new divine statue of Shamash. The relevant portion is as follows:

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| 12 | <i>ana DÛ-eš šal-mi šú-a-tu₄</i> | to the fashioning of that image |
| 13 | <i>ú-zu-un-šú ib-vi-ma</i> | his (Nabû-nādin-šumi’s) attention was directed and so, |
| 14 | <i>ina né-me-qí šá^dÉ-a</i> | by the skill of Ea, |
| 15 | <i>ina ši-pir^dNIN.ÍLDU</i> | by the craft of Ninildu, ¹⁶² |
| 16 | <i>^dKUG.SIG₁₇.BÀNDA-da</i> | Kusibanda, ¹⁶³ |
| 17 | <i>^dNIN.KUR.RA^dNIN.ZADIM</i> | Ninkurra ¹⁶⁴ (and) Ninzadim, ¹⁶⁵ |

158. Ibid., 303.

159. See W. Lambert and A. Millard, *Atrahasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood* (Winnona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999) 48, 49; “Inana and Enki” (ETCSL) Segment B: 6–15, and “Enki and the World Order” (ETCSL) lines 61–80, 86–88, and 267–73.

160. *Purification*: Lambert and Millard, *Atrahasis*, 56, 57 line 207; 58, 59 line 222; and “Enki and the World Order” (ETCSL) line 238. *Fertility*: “Enki and the World Order” (ETCSL) lines 250–66, 325–33, 249–357, 358–67. *Birth*: Ibid. lines 52–60. *Construction*: See “Enki’s Journey to Nibru” (ETCSL). *Arts and crafts*: “Enki and the World Order” (ETCSL) lines 61–80 and 81–85. *Creation*: See “Enki and Ninḫursaĝa” (ETCSL) lines 69–74, 97–107, 117–26, 126L–126Q, 178–85; and Enki and Ninmaḫ (ETCSL) lines 1–37. In the *Atrahasis Epic* the birth-goddess, Mami, is commanded to create humanity to bear the yoke of the gods, but she replies, “It is not appropriate for me to make things (*it-ti-ia-ma la na-tú a-na e-pé-ši*). Skill lies with Enki (*it-ti^den-ki-ma i-ba-aš-ši ši-ip-ru*),” (Lambert and Millard, *Atrahasis*, 56, 57 lines 200–201). It is Enki who devises the plan by which to create human-kind and who is involved, along with Mami, in carrying it out. See Lambert and Millard, *Atrahasis*, 210–16, 189–260, esp. pp. 250–54.

161. George, *Babylonian Topographical Texts*, 302.

162. A manifestation of Ea and the patron deity of carpenters. See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 23 n. 66.

163. A manifestation of Ea and patron deity of the gold smith. See *ibid.*, 23 n. 67.

164. A manifestation of Ea and patron deity of the stone cutters. See *ibid.*, 23 n. 68.

165. A manifestation of Ea and patron god of the lapidaries. See *ibid.*, 23 n. 69.

18	<i>ina</i> ¹⁷ KUG.SIG ₁₇ <i>ru-uš-ši-i</i> ¹	with reddish gold (and)
19	^{na4} ZA.GÌN <i>eb-bi</i>	lustrous lapis-lazuli he properly prepared
20	<i>ša-lam</i> ^d UTU EN GAL	the image of Šamaš, the great lord.
21	<i>ki-niš ú-kan-ni</i>	
22	<i>ina te-lil-ti</i>	By the purification rite
23	<i>šá</i> ^{dÉ-a} u ^d ASAL.LÚ. 𒀭	of Ea and Asalluḫi
24	<i>ma-har</i> ^d UTU ¹	before Šamaš,
25	¹ ina ¹ É.KAR.ZA.GÌN.NA	in the Ekarzaginna
26	¹ šá ¹ GÚ ^{id} Pu-rat- ¹ ti ¹	which is on the bank of the Euphrates,
27	<i>pi-šú im-si-¹ma¹</i>	he washed its mouth and
28	<i>ir-ma-a šu-bat-¹su¹</i>	(there) (the statue) took up its residence. ¹⁶⁶

The Assyrian king Esarhaddon also refers to Ea not only as the creator of the human craftsmen, but as the craftsman *par excellence* who himself is the source of the particular wisdom and skill necessary for fashioning a divine statue:

14 [i]t(?)¹-ti man-ni ilâni^{mes} rabûti^{mes} ba-nu-u ilâni^{mes} u ^diš-tar a^o-[ša]r la-²a-ri šip-ru mar-šu taš-ta-nap-par-a-ni 15 ši-pir te-diš-ti it-ti a-me-lu-ti la še-me-ti la na(!)-[ti]l(!)-ti šá ra-man-šá la ti-du-u* la par-sa-ta ár-kàt ûmê^{mes}-šá 16 ba-nu-ú ili ù ^diš-tar ku-um-mu qa-tuk-ku-un ina ra-ma-ni-ku-nu bi-na-a-ma ad/ t/t-man ilu-ti-ku-nu šir-ti 17 mim-mu-ú ina šur-ri-ku-un ib-šu-u li-in-né-pu-uš ina la šu-un-na-a-te zi-kir šap-ti-ku-un 18 mârê^{mes} um-ma-a-ni en-qu-u(?)*-ti ša** taq-ba-a a-na e-peš šip-ri šu-a-tu kîma ^{dÉ-a} ba-ni-šú-un* 19 uz-nu šir-tu šur-ka-šu*-nu-ti-ma lê²ûtu (?Á.GÁL-u-tû)-šu-un ka-ras-su-un ina qí-bi-ti-ku-nu šir-ti** mim-ma lip-ta-at qâtê¹-šú-un 20 li-šam-si-ku [ina] [ši-pir ^dNin-igi-kù¹⁶⁷

14 Whose right is it, O great gods, to create gods and goddesses in a place where man dare not trespass? This task of refurbishing (the statues), which you have constantly been allotting to me (by oracle), is difficult! (15) Is it the right of deaf and blind human beings who are ignorant of themselves and remain in ignorance throughout their lives? (16) The making of (images of) the gods and goddesses is your right, it is in your hands;¹⁶⁸ create (the gods), and in your exalted holy of holies (17) may what you yourselves have in your heart be brought about in accordance with your unalterable word. (18) Endow the skilled craftsmen whom you ordered to complete this task with as high an understanding as Ea, their creator. (19) Teach them skills by your exalted word; (20) make all their handiwork succeed through the craft of Ninshiku.¹⁶⁹

166. Text and translation from C. Woods, “The Sun-God Tablet,” 85–86.

167. R. Borger, *Die Inschriften Asarhaddons Königs von Assyrien* (AfOB 9; Graz, 1956), no. 53 lines 14–20.

168. I have removed “so I beseech you,” inserted here in Walker and Dick’s translation.

169. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 25, my emphasis.

The first text highlights Ea's role as the divine craftsman skilled in carpentry, metallurgy, and lapidary work, while the second identifies him generally as the source of the wisdom and skill needed to form divine images. These abilities and knowledge are also mentioned in the *mīs pî pî pî* texts. In both the Assyrian and the Babylonian versions the human craftsmen deny their role in creating the image, attributing the entire process to Ea in his various forms as Ninagal, Ninildu, Kusibanda, Ninkurra, and Ninzadim.¹⁷⁰

Divine craftsman, however, is not Ea's only title in the Washing and Opening of the Mouth. On several occasions, he is clearly identified as the father of the divine statue, his newborn "child."¹⁷¹ In the Nineveh ritual tablet the priest says three times to the newly created *ilu*:

ultu umi annî ana maḥar Ea abika tallak

From today you go before your father Ea.¹⁷²

libbaka liṭīb kabattaka liḥḍu

Let your heart be pleased, let your mind be happy.

*Ea abika ana maḥrika rišta limla*¹⁷³

May Ea, your father, be full of joy with you.

Hence, Ea was the progenitor of divine images on two levels: he was the master craftsman who constructed the statues in his temple workshop from precious raw materials, but he was also their father who delighted at the "birth" of his child within his temple orchard, the garden of the Apsû.

In the Egyptian Opening of the Mouth (*wpt-r*), the image was created and animated in the temple workshop or, in some cases, mummies or statues of the dead underwent the *wpt-r* at the tomb entrance or within the burial chamber. Unlike the *mīs pî pî pî* texts, however, the *wpt-r* texts themselves do not mention a garden. This does not mean, however, that gardens played no role in Egyptian funerary ritual. On the contrary, for example, the catafalque of Minnakhte (ca. 1475 B.C.E.), the overseer of granaries under Thutmoses III, is shown being escorted across a rectangular pool of water toward his sepulcher.¹⁷⁴ The tomb is surrounded on all sides by date palms ripe with fruit and verdant sycamores interspersed with mounds of cakes and bread offerings. Servants burn incense on handheld stands while others greet the dead with large lotus flowers.

A similar garden scene was discovered in the tomb of Rekhmire.¹⁷⁵ The garden consists of three concentric rings of flora, at the center of which is

170. Ibid., 66 lines 179–86, and 73, 80 lines 49–52.

171. Ibid., 57 lines 61, 63. See also ibid., 100 and 103 line 99; 194 and 204 line 7ab.

172. This line is also attested in the Babylon ritual text. See ibid., 70, 77 line 4.

173. Ibid., 57 lines 61–63.

174. C. K. Wilkinson, *Egyptian Wall Paintings: The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Collection of Facsimiles* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1983), 12–13, fig. 6.

175. N. Davies, *The Tomb of Rekhmire at Thebes* (vol. 2; New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1943) pl. 110.

a small lake full of fish and vegetation. The outer ring is formed by large, fruit-bearing, cone-shaped trees, some of which are laden with fruit.¹⁷⁶ The middle ring contains at least three different types of trees or large bushes, also covered with fruit. The trees or bushes in the center ring are similar to those in the outer ring, but smaller. They surround the central pool on which Rekhmire's statue, standing in the center of his barque, is pulled through the water by his servants. Additional servants gather fruit and carry liquid refreshment for Rekhmire. The accompanying text reads:

Take thee scented flowers [of the pool] which I have brought (thee) from the pick [of the plants] which are in these [gardens. Lo] the [servants] carry produce, shoots and fragrant stems of all sorts, that thou mayest be satisfied with its dainties and be replete with its offerings, that thy heart may partake of its tender growth and that thou mayest do therein what thy spirit desire for ever and ever.¹⁷⁷

On the far left, a servant holds a large lotus stem in his right hand with additional offerings in his left hand as Rekhmire's statue approaches. Behind the servant stands the shrine in which the statue will be installed. Although this scene may represent Rekhmire's actual garden which he cultivated and enjoyed during his lifetime, it may also have been intended, as were Egyptian temple gardens, as a microcosm of the perfectly ordered world in which the central pool symbolized Nun, the primeval sea from which all life sprang, and each type of plant and tree was associated with a particular deity.¹⁷⁸ Whether it was intended as such or not, it is clearly meant to represent the ideal environment in which the newly revived image of Rekhmire would reside for eternity. Its function differs, thus, from the role of the garden in the *mīs pī pīt pī*. Ea's garden was the locus of birth and animation for divine statues in Babylon because he was the patron deity of craftsmen and the statue's progenitor. Thus, the *ilu* was conceived and "born" with the help of and in proximity to its divine father, but it was then transported to its permanent home, its temple. The functional equivalent in the *wpt-r* to the garden of the Apsû would, it seems, have been the temple workshop, the domain of Ptah, and the tomb itself, the realm of Osiris through whose power the dead were "reborn." The tomb shrine, the place where the image was installed, and its surrounding garden, would then be the equivalent of the temple in the mouth-washing and mouth-opening ceremonies.

In Genesis 2, the garden of Eden is, like Ea's garden of the Apsû and like the Egyptian funerary garden, a sacred place. It was planted by the deity

176. Compare the sycamore in M. Gothein, *A History of Garden Art* (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1966), 4, fig. 3, and 5.

177. Norman de Garis, *The Tomb of Rekhmire at Thebes* (vol. 1; New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1943), 78.

178. R. Germer, "Gardens," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) 2:4.

himself and contained not only beautiful trees bearing edible fruit but two mysterious trees: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life (Gen 2:9). Further, Yahweh himself walked about in it (*hithallēk*, Gen 3:8), and it was inhabited by cherubim (Gen 3:24). It was also the place in which Adam's vitality was demonstrated. The notion that his ears, mouth, and eyes were opened is not stated but it is implied by the fact that God spoke to him about what he could and could not eat, that he named all the animals paraded before him, and by his exclamation¹⁷⁹ of delight at the creation of Eve. Furthermore, in order to cultivate and guard¹⁸⁰ the garden in which he had been placed, the man must have been granted motion at this time, as well. None of this is stated explicitly as separate stages in his vivification; rather, it seems that his animation, the point at which he was given the ability to hear, eat, see, and move about, is summarized in Gen 2:7: Yahweh Elohim breathed the breath of life (*nišmat ḥayyīm*) into the man and he became a living being (*nepeš ḥayyāh*).

Furthermore, the garden located in Eden was not simply a beautiful orchard. The author may have intended it to be understood as the very Temple (or perhaps the garden associated with the Temple) of Yahweh Elohim, although this is not stated explicitly in the text.¹⁸¹ This idea has been developed by G. Wenham.¹⁸² Wenham enumerates several features of the garden of Eden that find parallels in sanctuaries, including the presence of the cherubim and the mention of fine gold and precious stones.¹⁸³

179. *šwh* ("to command") in Gen 2:16–17; *ʾkl* in Gen 2:16–17; *qrʾ* + *l* in Gen 2:20; *ʾmr* + *zoʾt* *happaʾam* in Gen 2:23.

180. *ʾbd* and *šmr* in Gen 2:15.

181. See D. Callender, *Adam in Myth and History: Ancient Israelite Perspectives on the Primal Human* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000) 42–54. On the notion that the Garden of Eden was the Temple of Yahweh, Callender comments, "In the tradition-historical background of the narrative of Gen 2–3 there is yet another important idea present. It is an idea not explicitly stated . . . but an idea that nonetheless exists just beneath the surface. As a locus for divine activity, Eden provides the archetype for the temple as the place where divine and human meet. Just as Eden is the divine dwelling where a human may encounter God unmediated, so also is the temple the divine dwelling where it is possible for a human to encounter the divine unmediated" (Callender, *Adam*, 50).

182. G. Wenham, "Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story," in *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1986) 19–25. See also J. D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Winston, 1985); L. Stager, "Jerusalem and the Garden of Eden," in *Eretz-Israel: Archaeological, Historical and Geographical Studies* (ed. Baruch A. Levine, et al.; Jerusalem: Israelite Exploration Society, 1999) 183–94; Callender, *Adam*, 50–54; and G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*. Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 2004), 66–80.

183. *Cherubim*: Wenham notes that the cherubim are stationed at the eastern entrance to the garden because that is the direction from which it was entered ("Sanctuary Symbolism," 401). Cherubim also guarded the inner sanctuary (1 Kgs 6: 23–28), their images were sewn into the tabernacle curtains and temple wall (Exod 26: 31; 1 Kgs 6:29), and two cherubim sat atop the ark (Exod 25:18–22). *Gold and precious stones*: Ibid., 402. Compare

He states:

The garden of Eden is not viewed by the author of Gen simply as a piece of Mesopotamian farmland, but as an archetypal sanctuary, that is, a place where God dwells and where man should worship him. Many of the features of the garden may also be found in . . . sanctuaries, particularly the tabernacle or the Jerusalem temple. These parallels suggest that the garden itself is understood as a sort of sanctuary.¹⁸⁴

The creation and then placement of the first *human* in a sacred garden is curious.¹⁸⁵ In the Sumerian flood story, in "Enki and Ninmah," and in the "Song of the Hoe,"¹⁸⁶ humans were placed in a city rather than a garden, to relieve the gods of their work and to provide for them. Similarly in the Babylonian *Atraḥasis Epic* and *Enūma Eliš*, humans were put in cities to build shrines and dig canals, a job formerly assigned to the lesser gods (the Igigi).¹⁸⁷ Why, then, does Yahweh set (*šym*, Gen 2:8) and then install (*nwh*) in Gen 2:15)¹⁸⁸ Adam in a sacred garden and, more specifically, a garden

šoham in Gen 2:12 with Exod 25:7; 28:9, 20; and 1 Chr 29:2, where *šoham* stones were used to adorn the tabernacle, temple, and high priestly garments.

184. Wenham, "Sanctuary Symbolism," 19. Note also the use of *hithhallēk*, "to walk to and fro" in Gen 3:8 and in Lev 26:12; Deut 23:15; and 2 Sam 7:6–7, where it is associated with the divine presence (Wenham, "Sanctuary Symbolism," 400–401). See also Callender's discussion of Eden language in Pss 36: 8–10, 52:10; Jer 17:12–13; and Ezek 47:7–9, 12 (*Adam*, 7–9, 12). For additional parallels between temple building and Gen 1:1–2:3; see M. Weinfeld, "Sabbath, Temple and the Enthronement of the Lord: The Problem of the Sitz im Leben of Gen 1:1–2:3," in *Melanges bibliques et orientaux en l'honneur de M. Henri Cazelles* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1981), 501–12.

185. In the Sargon Legend, the infant king of Agade is rescued from a river by the water drawer, Aqqi, and set to work in Aqqi's garden (*kirû*). There Sargon, referred to as a gardener ([. . .]LÚ.NU.KIRI-ti-i á), was shown great affection ([*ra-man-ni-ma*) by the goddess Ištar. The text has been edited by B. Lewis, *The Sargon Legend: A Study of the Akkadian Text and the Tale of the Hero who was Exposed at Birth* (Cambridge, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1980), esp. p. 25 lines 9–13; and more recently in J. Goodnick Westenholz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade: The Texts* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 36–49, esp. pp. 40–41 lines 11–12. The parallels to Gen 2 are obvious in that a royal figure or king is placed in a sacred garden to till it. The point here, however, is that, as far as I am aware, there is no ancient Near Eastern story in which newly created *humanity* is placed in a sacred garden.

186. *Sumerian flood story*: M. Civil, "The Sumerian Flood Story," in *Atraḥasis: The Babylonian Flood Story* (ed. W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 138–74. "Enki and Ninmah": The transliteration and an English translation are available in ETCSL, online: http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.1*#. "Song of the Hoe": For the text and an English translation, see ETCSL, online: <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk>, and the accompanying bibliography, which includes both print and electronic sources. See also G. Farber, "The Song of the Hoe," in *The Context of Scripture* (ed. William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 1:511–12 lines 28–34.

187. Lambert and Millard, *Atraḥasis*, 55, 57 and 54, 56 lines 1–12; B. R. Foster, *Before the Muses* (3rd ed.; Bethesda: CDL, 2005), 436–86; and the more recent and updated version in Talon, *The Standard Babylonian Creation Myth*, 63 lines 34–37.

188. For the translation of *nwh* as "to install," see the discussion on Gen 2:15 in §4.7.3, below.

that is described in terms reminiscent of a temple (or a temple garden)?¹⁸⁹ That this is a most unusual setting for primal man is confirmed by a second biblical story about the garden of Eden, in Ezek 28:11–19.

4.7.2. *Excursus on Ezek 28:11–19: A Primal Human Myth?*

In Ezek 28:11–19 the prophet describes a creature who was flawless, “full of wisdom and perfect in beauty” (*mālēʾ ḥokmāh ūkālil yōpī*). He lived in the garden of Eden as a divinely appointed guardian cherub (*ʿatt kārūb mimśaḥ* in 28:14) and he was adorned with a beautiful covering inlaid with nine rare and precious gemstones, each set in fine gold (28:13). Several commentators have identified this divine-royal figure as the primal human.¹⁹⁰ Among them is D. Callender.¹⁹¹ Despite the absence of any explicit reference to humankind in the oracle, Callender argues there are several indications that the king of Tyre represents the original human.¹⁹² First, the immediately preceding oracle in 28:1–10 is addressed to the prince of Tyre (*nəgīd šōr*), who is identified explicitly as a human (*ʿādām*) in v. 2.¹⁹³ Moreover, the protagonist in Ezek 28:11–19 is reduced to ashes (*ʿēper*, v. 18), recalling, says Callender, the curse on Adam (Gen 3:19) that he will return to the dust (*ʿāpār*) from which he was created. Further, the cherub possesses divine wisdom (*mālēʾ ḥokmāh* in 28:12), and it is explicitly stated that he resides in Eden, the garden of God (*bəʿeden gan ʾēlōhīm ḥayītā* in 28:13).¹⁹⁴

While the cherub in Ezek 28:11–19 shows some affinity with Adam in Gen 2:5–3:24, there are significant problems with identifying this enigmatic figure as primal man. The reduction of *melek šōr* to ashes (*ʿēper*) in Ezek 28:18 does not seem to be a direct allusion to *hāʾādām* in Genesis 2. First, *ʿāpār* in Gen 3:19 refers to fine, dry soil, loose earth or dust, whereas *ʿēper* in the context of Ezek 28:18 refers not to dust but to ashes that result from the king’s destruction by fire. This is not the case in Gen 3:19. Adam *returns* to dust (*ʿāpār*) because it was this very dust (*ʿāpār*) from which he was created (Gen 2:7). Thus, it is unlikely that the mention of “ashes” (*ʿēper*) in Ezek 28:18 is an allusion to Gen 2:7 and 3:19.

189. See Ezek 28:13–14 which refers to Eden as “the garden of God” (*gan ʾēlōhīm*) on the “holy mountain of God” (*bəḥar qōdeš ʾēlōhīm*).

190. W. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel 2* (trans. James D. Martin; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 85; R. M. Hals, *Ezekiel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 199; W. Eichrodt, *Ezekiel: A Commentary* (London: SCM Press, 1970), 392; and J. Blenkinsopp, *Ezekiel* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1990), 123–25.

191. D. Callender, “The Primal Human in Ezekiel and the Image of God,” in *The Book of Ezekiel: Theological and Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Margaret S. Odell and John T. Strong (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2000), 175–93.

192. Callender does not identify the cherub as primal man. He translates Ezek 28:14 as, “I placed you (the king of Tyre) with the anointed guardian cherub” (Callendar, Adam, 88, 109, my emphasis).

193. Callender, *Adam*, 89.

194. *Ibid.*, 89.

Furthermore, the MT identifies the king *as* the anointed guardian cherub (ʿatt kərūb, 28:14). On the basis of the LXX, the Peshitta, and Gen 3:24, Callender amends the MT from ʿatt kərūb, "you were the cherub," to ʿet-kərūb, "you were *with* the cherub."¹⁹⁵ The problem here is that ʿatt looks like a second-feminine-singular personal pronoun. It could, however, be a second-masculine-singular pronoun. Indeed, as Barr observes, this form of the second-masculine-singular, although quite rare, does exist in Num 11:15 and Deut 5:24, and it is hard to accept that the Masoretes would have misread תָּ as the unusual variant of the second masculine pronoun rather than the ubiquitous preposition "with" if the latter was intended.¹⁹⁶ He comments:

This readily explains why the LXX and the Peshitto had what appears to be a "variant reading." Not at all to their discredit, they failed to recognize the written form. The form תָּ might, by mere statistical probability, be the direct object particle, but no verb was obviously in sight to govern this object. Failing that, it was familiar as the preposition "with." Both Greek and Syriac translated it so. In both cases it is by far most easily explained as a misidentification of the extremely unusual form of the MT. Therefore no Greek and Syriac "variant reading" may serve as a basis for an emendation of the MT. On the contrary, their readings, properly analysed, indirectly confirm the MT.¹⁹⁷

Furthermore, the LXX ignores the Hebrew syntax in 28:14. Without explanation it omits the conjunction on the following verb, ûnətaṯṯika,

195. The LXX reads *meta tou cheroub*, "with the cherub." The Peshitta reads *whwyt mkrwb*, "and you were with the cherub." Callender, *Adam in Myth and History*, 89. For a list of the many scholars who follow the LXX of Ezek 28:14, see R. R. Wilson, "The Death of the King of Tyre: The Editorial History of Ezekiel 28," in *Love and Death in the Ancient Near East* (ed. J. H. Marks and R. M. Good; Guilford, CT: Four Quarters, 1987), 211–18, esp. 215 n. 21. Zimmerli follows the LXX and translates the MT as, "I associated you with [the] . . . guardian cherub" (*Ezekiel: A Commentary of the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 2:85.

196. J. Barr, "Thou art the Cherub": Ezekiel 28:14 and the Post-Ezekiel Understanding of Genesis 2–3," *Priests, Prophets and Scribes: Essays on the Formation and Heritage of Second Temple Judaism in honour of Joseph Blenkinsopp* (ed. Eugene Ulrich et al.; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 213–23, esp. pp. 215–16. On תָּ in Ezek 28:14 as the 2ms pronoun, see also M. Greenberg, *Ezekiel 21–37: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 22A; New York: Doubleday, 1997), 583; and J. E. Miller, "The Maelak of Tyre (Ezekiel 28, 11–19)," *ZAW* 105 (1993): 497–501.

197. Barr, "Thou art the Cherub," 216. He adds, "it is much easier to suppose that the LXX failed to recognize תָּ as the pronoun than to suppose that it really was the preposition or particle, later wrongly vocalized by the Masoretic tradition as the extremely rare form meaning 'thou.' . . . If the Masoretic tradition had seen the form תָּ and there was some doubt what it was, it is understandable that they would have thought of diagnosing it as 'with' or as the direct object particle, but it is frankly unbelievable that they would have identified it as the very rare form 'thou.' . . . While it is easy to explain the LXX and the Syriac renderings as a misreading of the extremely unusual Hebrew represented by the MT, the opposite does not hold true" (Barr, "Thou Art the Cherub," 216–17).

combining what are two separate clauses in Hebrew: *’att kərûb mimšah hassôkêk*, “You were an anointed guardian cherub,” and *ûnətatfika bəhar qôdeš ’ēlôhîm*, “And I placed you on the holy mountain of God.” This must have been influenced by the textual choice made in v. 14 in which *אִתְּ* was understood as *’et*, “with,” rather than the personal pronoun *’att*, “you.” Thus, the only option in v. 14 was to ignore the conjunction, rendering the phrase “With the anointed guardian cherub I placed you.”¹⁹⁸

There is an additional point: to identify the cherub we must explain the peculiar *w’ bdk krwb* in Ezek 28:16b. The verb may be from the root *’bd*, “to perish, destroy,” but the form is obscure. The LXX interprets the cherub as the subject and the second masculine singular pronoun as the object: “And the cherub led you out (*kai hēgagen se to cheroub*) from among the stones of fire.” However, it is also quite conceivable, as Barr suggests, that in *w’ bdk* the *alep* of the prefix fused with the *alep* of the root and the form is thus a first-person-singular verb in the imperfect.¹⁹⁹ It would then be rendered as a vocative, “I will destroy you, O guardian cherub,” a reading supported by the Vulgate and in Jerome’s commentary on this verse.²⁰⁰

Besides the textual evidence we have been discussing there are contextual considerations that inform our identification of the cherub. First, the cherub is clothed in some sort of fine covering beautifully and skillfully inlaid with nine precious stones. Although this covering is not explicitly described as “glory” (*kābôd*) in Ezek 28, the context, the material from which it was made, and its workmanship suggest that it should be understood as a divine garment manifesting radiance. This is further indicated by the descriptions of cherubim elsewhere in the book of Ezekiel, where they are said to sparkle or gleam like burnished bronze (*wəṇōṣṣāšîm kə’ēn nəḥōšet qālāl*, Ezek 1:7) and have a fiery and bright (*nōgah*, Ezek 1:13) appearance comparable to burning coals of fire (*kəgaḥâlê ’ēš bō’ārôt*, Ezek 1:13). In the context of Ezekiel, this luminosity and splendor that the cherubim manifest is likely the very *kābôd Yhwh*, which stood over (*’md + ’al*) and hovered above the cherubim (*ālêhem milmā’alāh*).²⁰¹

More important, perhaps, for our identification of the cherub is the statement in Ezek 28:13, 14b that the cherub dwelt in the garden of Eden *in the midst of stones of fire* (*bəṭôk ’abnê ’ēš*). The cherub’s presence in Eden, his glorious covering, and his appointment as guardian (Ezek 28:14) are insufficient to determine his identity, because humans, like the cherub, dwelt in the garden of Eden as watchmen and may have been covered in

198. Ibid., 219.

199. BDB, 2a. See also Barr, “Thou art the Cherub,” 218–19.

200. As it is translated in the KJV, NJPSV, ASV, ESV, NASB, and NIV. The Vulgate reads *et eieci te de monte Dei et peridi te o cherub protegens*, “I cast you out from the mountain of God and destroyed you, O covering cherub.” St. Jerome, *Commentariorum in Hiezechielem, Libri XIV* (Turnholt: Brepolis, 1964), 395; and K. Stevenson and M. Glerup, eds., *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Ezekiel, Daniel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008), 96.

201. *Stood over*: Ezek 10:18. *Hovered above*: Ezek 10:19 and 11:22.

divine glory.²⁰² The stones of fire, however, are unique to the cherub. They are not mentioned in Gen 2:5–3:24, nor are they connected in any biblical text to Adam. They may be related, however, to the coals of fire (*gaḥâlê ʿēš*) associated with the cherubim in Ezek 1:13 and 10:2, 6–8:²⁰³

Ezek 1:13:

וּדְמוּת הַחַיּוֹת מֵרָאִיָּהֶם כְּנִחְלִי־אֵשׁ בְּעֵרוֹת כְּמֵרָאָה הַלִּפְדִּים הָיָא מִתְהַלֶּכֶת בֵּין הַחַיּוֹת וְנִגְהָ לְאֵשׁ וּמִן־הָאֵשׁ יוֹצֵא כָרֶךְ:

As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like *burning coals of fire*, like the appearance of torches it (the likeness) was moving back and forth among the living creatures. And bright was the fire, and from the fire lightning would go forth.

Ezek 10:2:

וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָאִישׁ לְבֹשׁ הַבְּדִים וַיֹּאמֶר בֹּא אֶל־בֵּינוֹת לְגַלְגַּל אֶל־תַּחַת לְכְרוֹב וּמִלֵּא חֲפָנֶיךָ נִחְלִי־אֵשׁ מִבֵּינוֹת לְכְרוֹבִים וְזָרַק עַל־הָעִיר וַיָּבֹא לְעֵינַי:

And he said to the man clothed in linen, "Go in among the wheels underneath the cherub and fill your hands with *coals of fire from between the cherubim*, and scatter (them) over the city.

Ezek 10:6–8:

וַיְהִי בְּצִוּתוֹ אֶת־הָאִישׁ לְבֹשׁ־הַבְּדִים לֵאמֹר קַח אֵשׁ מִבֵּינוֹת לְגַלְגַּל מִבֵּינוֹת לְכְרוֹבִים וַיָּבֹא וַיַּעֲמֵד אֶצֶל הָאוֹפֶן: ⁷ וַיִּשְׁלַח הַכְּרוֹב אֶת־יָדוֹ מִבֵּינוֹת לְכְרוֹבִים אֶל־הָאֵשׁ אֲשֶׁר בֵּינוֹת הַכְּרוֹבִים וַיִּשָּׂא וַיִּתֵּן אֶל־חֲפָנָי לְבֹשׁ הַבְּדִים וַיִּקַּח וַיֵּצֵא: ⁸ וַיֵּרָא לְכְרוֹבִים תְּכֵנִית יְד־אָדָם תַּחַת כַּנְפֵיהֶם:

And when he commanded the man clothed in linen, "Take *fire* from between the wheels, *from between the cherubim*," then he went in and stood beside the wheel. 7 And a cherub stretched out its hand from between the cherubim to the fire that was between the cherubim, and lifted (it) and gave (it) to the hands of the man clothed in linen, and he took it and went out. 8 The cherubim appeared to have the form of a human hand under their wings.

In all three texts, the objects are referred to as *coals of fire* (*gaḥâlê ʿēš*) or simply fire (*ʿēš*) rather than *stones of fire* (*ʾabnê ʿēš*) as in Ezek 28:14, 16. However, their association with and proximity to the cherubim in Ezek 1:13 and 10:2, 6–8 suggests that perhaps the coals of fire, seen in Ezekiel's visions in Ezek 1:13 and 10:2, 6–8 as burning on a censer or altar²⁰⁴ which was situated between the cherubim, are to be identified with the stones of fire in Ezek 28:14, 16.²⁰⁵ Nowhere in the Hebrew Bible is primal man associated with *gaḥâlê ʿēš* or *ʾabnê ʿēš*. They are exclusively related to Yahweh

202. See pp. 165–168 below.

203. See also Isa 6:6–7.

204. See Lev 16:12.

205. Although I came to it independently, R. R. Wilson has suggested the identification of the stones of fire with the coals of fire. See R. R. Wilson, "The Death of the King

(Ps 18:13–14[12–13]), the seraphim (Isa 6:6–7), and the cherubim, and, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest (Lev 16:12), although there, too, the coals are to be placed before Yahweh. If *gaḥâlê ʿēš* and *ʿabnê ʿēš* are to be identified with one another, as I have suggested, this may indicate that the cherub in Ezek 28 is not primal man but a distinct heavenly being.

The greatest problem, however, in identifying the cherub of Ezekiel 28 with the first human is the fact that the cherub was “full of wisdom” (*mālêʾ ḥokmāh*) prior to the discovery of his iniquity (*ʿawlātāh* in 28:15). His punishment had nothing to do with the acquisition of illicit wisdom but rather with violence (*ḥāmās*), sin (*ḥtʾ*), pride (*gābāh libbākā*), and the corruption of wisdom (*šihattā ḥokmātākā*) that he already possessed (Ezek 28:16–17). This contrasts with the situation in Genesis 3. Adam and Eve were blameless when they lacked the forbidden knowledge of good and evil. Unlike the cherub, *their offense was in trying to be like God and his hosts*,²⁰⁶ the latter of which presumably would have included the cherubim, in seeking divine wisdom that did not belong to them.

A final point is in order. Although one may argue that the king of Tyre’s identification with the *nagîd sôr* and *ʿādām* in Ezek 28:2, combined with his location in Eden (Ezek 28:13), is sufficient evidence to identify him with primal humans, this is not necessarily so. Notice that in Ezek 28:2 the *nagîd sôr* identifies himself as a god, “A god am I, in [the] seat of gods I sit” (*ʿēl ʾānî mōšab ʿēlōhîm yāšabtî*, see also Ezek 28:9), and twice it is said that he considers himself (lit., his “heart”) to be like a god (*wattittēn libbākā kālēb ʿēlōhîm* in Ezek 28:2, and *tittākā ʾet lābābākā kālēb ʿēlōhîm* in Ezek 28:6). It would, therefore, have been altogether appropriate for the author to make a similar comparison between the king of Tyre and a divine being in the following lament in Ezek 28:12–19.²⁰⁷ That is, the author of Ezek 28:12–19, presumably with Ezek 28:1–10 in hand, would have reworked an older story about a rebellious guardian cherub into a commentary on the king of Tyre as a complement to Ezek 28:1–10. This would explain why the comparison of a cherub who was full of wisdom (Ezek 28:12; see also Ezek 28:3, 5) prior to his rebellion was an appropriate comparison to the prince/king of Tyre, who, unlike Adam, was “wiser than Daniel” (Ezek 28:3) until his wisdom was taken away (Ezek 28:7b).

Although I conclude, for the above reasons, that the king of Tyre in Ezek 28:11–19 should not be identified with primal humans, this text is important for the present study because it suggests that the garden of Eden was not a place an ancient reader would expect to find newly created *human-kind*. It was, rather, home to Yahweh and his hosts, including the cherubim. By placing *human beings* in the sacred garden rather than in an urban envi-

of Tyre: The Editorial History of Ezekiel 28,” in *Love and Death in the Ancient Near East* (ed. J. H. Marks and R. M. Good; Guilford, CT: Four Quarters, 1987), 211–18.

206. Gen 3:5, 22.

207. Rather than being self-identified as an *ʿēl*, as in Ezek 28:2, however, the prophet likens the king, via metaphor (*ʿatt karûb* in Ezek 28:14), to an anointed guardian cherub.

ronment removed from Yahweh’s holy habitation, the Eden story makes a remarkable statement about the divine-human relationship: God and humankind were meant to dwell *together*.

4.7.3. Genesis 2:15

וַיִּקַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּגֶן־עֵדֶן לְעֹבְדָהּ וּלְשֹׁמְרָהּ:

Yahweh Elohim took the man and installed him in the garden of Eden to till it and guard it.

In the *mīs pî pî pî* ceremony, after the creation and animation of the image was complete, it was installed in its temple home. This climactic moment was a distinct phase of the rite²⁰⁸ accompanied by its own incantations in which the priest entreated the god, manifest in its statue, to establish (*kanû*) itself in the sanctuary.²⁰⁹

May you be the good protective deity of your temple! (*lu-ú la-mas-su dam[i-iq-tum šá É-ka at-ta]*). In the sanctuary of your temple may you be established! (*ina a-šír-ti É-ka [lu-u ka-a-a-na-at]*) In your place, the abode of rest, take up your dwelling for ever! (*ina šub-ti-ka ana da-ra-a-ti šu-bat né-eh-ta’ ti-šab*).

Similarly, in the *wpt-r* once the statue of the deceased (or its mummy) had been created, animated, clothed, and fed, it, too, was installed in the appropriate cultic context, the tomb shrine, where it would rest and reside forever in its “house of eternity.”²¹⁰ The garden scenes in the tombs of Min-nakhte and Rekhmire, mentioned above, beautifully depict this concluding episode of the Opening of the Mouth ritual.

After Adam had been brought to life and granted full animation of all his senses in Genesis 2, “Yahweh Elohim installed the man (*way-yannihēhû*) in the garden to cultivate it and guard it.” In Genesis 2, there are two different verbs used to describe the man’s placement in the garden. In Gen 2:8, the generic *šym*, “to put, place,” appears. However, in Gen 2:15, the author uses the second Hiphil of *nwh*.²¹¹ As with *šym*, this verb also commonly refers to putting, placing, or setting, and this is reflected in modern English translations of *way-yannihēhû* in Gen 2:15: “and he put him” or “and he placed him.”²¹² Thus, *nwh* in Gen 2:15 may simply reflect stylistic variance. However, given the context, it is worth noting that the second Hiphil of *nwh* is used in several biblical texts to describe the installation of

208. See Winter, “Idols of the King,” 23–24.

209. Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 160–61, 184 line 11ab; and 170, 185 lines 60ab–62ab.

210. F. Dunand and C. Zivie-Coche, *Gods and Men in Egypt 3000 B.C.E.–395 C.E.* (trans. David Lorton; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 172.

211. HALOT 2:679–80. I am thankful to Prof. John Huehnergard for alerting me to the fact that *nwh* in Gen 2:15 is in the second Hiphil.

212. See, for example, Lev 24:12; Josh 6:23; Judg 6:18, 20; 1 Kgs 13: 30, 31. “He put him”: ESV, JPS, NASB, NIV, RSV, and NRSV. “He placed him”: TNK.

cultic implements and divine images. In 2 Chr 4:8, Solomon, “made ten tables and installed (*way-yannah*) them in the temple.” More significantly, in 2 Kgs 17:29, the residents of Bethel are described as making (*‘ōšîm*) their own gods (*‘ēlōhāyw*) and installing (*way-yannîhu*) them in shrines on the Samarian high places. The second Hiphil of *nwh* also appears in Isa 46:7 where it refers to a divine image (*‘ēl*) which is carried by its worshipers, who “set it (*wəyannîhūhū*) in its place,” that is, its shrine or temple. Finally, in Zech 5: 5–11, the prophet sees a container (*hā’ēpāh*), with a woman inside, lifted into the sky. He asks the angel where it is being taken. The angel replies, “To the country of Babylon, to build a temple for it. When it is ready, it will be installed (*wəhūnnîhā*)²¹³ in its place.”

Although inconclusive, given the cultic context of Genesis 2 we should at least consider the possibility that the author chose the second Hiphil of *nwh* in Gen 2:15 to indicate that Adam was not simply placed in the garden of Eden but that Yahweh installed him there in the office of royal caretaker and watchman,²¹⁴ similar to the way a divine statue would have been installed in its own temple, as in the *mīs pî pīt pî*, or a statue or mummy would have been installed in its tomb, as in the *wpt-r*.

4.7.4. Genesis 2:25

וַיְהִיו שְׁנֵיהֶם עֲרוּמִים הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְלֹא יָתַבְשׁוּ׃

The two of them were naked, the man and his wife, but they were not ashamed.

4.7.4.1. The Clothing of Divine Images in the *mīs pî pīt pî* and the *wpt-r*

In this section, I will discuss briefly the clothing of divine and royal images as it is mentioned in the *mīs pî pīt pî* and the *wpt-r*. We will then turn to the question of whether or not Adam and Eve may have been similarly clothed with divine glory.

Prior to the installation of the divine statue, the Mesopotamian priests clothed the divine image with splendid garments, crowned it with a golden and jewel-studded diadem, and adorned it with insignia appropriate to its tasks and identity. The *mīs pî pīt pî* name specifically an “Exalted garment, *lamaḥuššu*-garment of white linen” and “the trappings of divinity,”²¹⁵ which would have included additional garments.

213. In Zech 5:11 the verb appears in the second Hophal. See HALOT 2:680.

214. The evidence for the installation of royal images in Mesopotamian temples is, at present, negligible. However, based on extant texts for the installation of divine images, the royal coronation rituals of Šulgi of the Third Dynasty of Ur, and the Gudea inscriptions, which attest to the fact that at least some of the Gudea statues were placed in temples, Winter concludes, “It seems appropriate to suggest as a working hypothesis that royal statues introduced into the temple would have been subject to rituals of installation, just as the divine images were” (“Idols of the King,” 24).

215. *Én* [túg]-[maḥ túg]-‘níg-lám-ma gada-babbar-ra in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 73, 76, and 80 line 55. *Ṭamannuma ša ilūti* in *ibid.*, 73, 77, and 81 line 64.

Unfortunately, the “Exalted garment” incantation has not survived and the *mīs pî pî pî* texts do not elaborate on what “the trappings of the divinity” included.²¹⁶ However, the divine tiara, which was, perhaps, the most significant element in a divine statue’s wardrobe, is described in the surviving incantation from the Babylonian version of the *mīs pî pî pî*, entitled “Majestic crown” (*aga-maḥ*):²¹⁷

- 1ab . . . Majestic crown, which is endowed with awesome splendor
(*nam-ri-ir-ri ra-mu-û*),
- 2ab Crown whose glistening splendor ([*r*]a-*šub-b*[a-ta]) . . .
- 3ab Crown, which shines like the day, whose radiance (*me-lam-mu-šû*)²¹⁸ touches the Heavens.
- 4ab Glorious crown of sumptuous appearance,
- 5ab Crown whose appearance is gleaming red (*r*[*u*]-*uš-û-û*),²¹⁹ like Shamash it casts its radiance (*ša-ru-ri*) over the lands.
- 6ab The prince in the Apsu determined for it a grand destiny.
- 7ab Father Enki/Ea, the craftsman, creator of Heaven and Earth, in the Apsu determined for it a grand destiny.
- 8ab Great Anu in the pure Heavens decorated it . . .
- 9ab Anu the prince, [determined] its fate . . .
- 10ab Asalluḫi/Marduk, whose understanding . . .
- 11ab Asarre/Marduk, son of the Apsu . . .
- 12ab (lost)
- 13ab Kusu, the chief exorcist of Enlil, with a water basin, with pure water from the Apsu, purified it, cleansed it and made it bright.
- 14ab The pure crown perfected²²⁰ as an emblem of divinity (*a-gu-û* [*el-lu šá ana*] *si-mat* DINGIR-ti *šu-lu-ku*)

216. On the wardrobes of Mesopotamian deities see Oppenheim, “Golden Garments,” 172–93; E. Matsushima, “Divine Statues in Mesopotamia: Their Fashioning and Clothing and Their Interaction with the Society,” in *Official Cult and Popular Religion in the Ancient Near East* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1993), 209–19; and T. Podella, *Das Lichtkleid JHWHs: Untersuchungen zur Gestaltbarkeit Gottes im Alten Testament und seiner altorientalischen Umwelt* (Tübingen: Mohr Seibek, 1996), esp. pp. 107–16.

217. The text and translation is published in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 193–95 and 203–4 lines 1ab–14ab. See also Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 195 and 204 lines 2ab–5ab.

218. Or, as Winter translates *melammu*, “an encompassing aura.” See p. 2575 in I. Winter, “Aesthetics in Ancient Mesopotamian Art,” in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East* (ed. J. M. Sasson; New York: Scribners, 1995) 2568–82.

219. The reference in line 5ab to a “gleaming red appearance” recalls the crowns Esarhaddon made for the newly refurbished deities of Babylon, “made of red gold and precious stones, the symbol of the lordship of Aššur, king of the gods . . . clad in awe, full of dignity, bearing brilliance, covered with light,” as translated in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 26.

220. To describe a cult object as “perfected” was “the crowning degree of praise,” I. Winter in ‘Surpassing Work’: Mastery of Materials and the Value of Skilled Production in Ancient Sumer,” in *Culture Through Objects: Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honour of*

One of the most significant features of the crown is the brilliant splendor that characterizes it and emanates from it. It is described with a variety of light-related terms whose meanings, while not identical, overlap significantly: *namrīru* (1b), “supernatural, awe-inspiring luminosity”; *rašubbatu* (2b), “awesomeness, overwhelming impact, frightful aspect”; *ruššu* (5b) “having a reddish sheen”: as in the red of gleaming gold: *šarūru* (5b) “radiance, brilliance, sunlight”;²²¹ and *melammu* (13b), “effulgence” or “radiance/aura.” The latter term is particularly difficult to define, in part because its meaning seems to have changed over time. According to S. Aster, in 2nd-millennium texts *melammu* refers to a “covering or outer layer which demonstrates power: the power is sometimes, but not always, represented by means of radiant phenomena.”²²² However, in 1st-millennium texts, the term becomes synonymous with radiance, specifically, a “light plus sheen yielding a kind of lustrousness” which is manifest as “a physical emanation or aura surrounding its bearer.”²²³ Both describe the *melammu* of the crown in the above incantation, although clearly the term is used, in conjunction with *namrīru*, *rašubbatu*, *ruššu*, and *šarūru*, to denote its radiance and splendor. This vital piece of the divine wardrobe was intended as a physical representation, or perhaps, more accurately, a *manifestation* of divine glory, the splendid luminosity of which would have radiated from the image’s head outward in all directions.

Although *melammu* was characteristic of the gods, it was also awarded to human kings as a sign of divine approval, royal status, and legitimacy.²²⁴

P. R. S. Moorey (ed. P. R. S. Potts Moorey et al.; Oxford: Griffith Institute, 2003), 403–21, esp. p. 415.

221. *Namrīru*: CAD N/1 237–38. See also S. Z. Aster, *The Phenomenon of Divine and Human Radiance in the Hebrew Bible and in Northwest Semitic and Mesopotamian Literature: A Philological and Comparative Study* (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2006), 145–47. *Rašubbatu*: CAD R, 212–13. See also Aster, *The Phenomenon*, 140–44. *Ruššu*: CAD R, 427–29. *Šarūru*: CAD Š/3, 140–43.

222. Aster, *The Phenomenon*, 57.

223. I. Winter, “Radiance as an Aesthetic Value in the Art of Mesopotamia (with Some Indian Parallels),” in Art, *the Integral Vision: A Volume of Essay in Felicitation of Kapila Vatsyayan* (ed. Kapila Vatsyayan, Baidyanath Saraswati, S. C. Malik, and Madhu Khanna; New Delhi: Printworld, 1994) 123–32, esp. p. 124 and n.5., 125; and CAD M/2 9–12, *melammu*. For more on radiant light as it pertains to the clothing of Mesopotamian deities, see E. Cassin, *La splendeur divine: Introduction à l’étude de la mentalité mésopotamienne* (Civilisations et Sociétés 8; Paris: Mouton, 1968); T. Podella, *Das Lichtkleid JHWHs: Untersuchungen zur Gestalthaftigkeit Gottes im Alten Testament und seiner altorientalischen Umwelt* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996); Aster, *The Phenomenon*, and Mehmet-Ali Ataç, “The Melammu as Divine Epiphany and Usurped Entity” in *Ancient Near Eastern Art in Context: Studies in Honor of Irene J. Winter by Her Students* (ed. Jack Cheng and Marian H. Feldman; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 295–316.

224. *Status*: See *ibid.*, 126; Aster, *The Phenomenon*, 46. *Legitimacy*: The *melammu* “legitimized the king by endowing him with godlike appearance and power” (Oppenheim, “Akkadian *Pul(u)h(t)u* and *Melammu*,” 31–32). The first Assyrian king to receive this honor was Tukulti-Ninurta I. In a hymn at the beginning of the *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic*, his *melammu*

That its origins were divine, however, was acknowledged in a text of Adad-nirari II who claims that it was the gods themselves who “raised me above crowned kings (and) placed on my head the royal splendor” (UGU MAN. MEŠ-ni ʿšūʿ-ut a-ge-ge iš-šu-ú-ni me-lam-me MAN-ti).²²⁵

The association between *melammu* and the crown is even more explicit in “Esarhaddon’s Renewal of the Gods.” The king states:

32b agû ni-kil-tú si-mat bêlu-u-ti 33 [ša] Aššur šar ilâni^{mes} bêli-ia* šá ħurâši rušši (RUŠ.A) (û) abnê^{mes} ni-siq-ti ú- še-piš-ma ú-tir âš-ru-uš- šû agû šû-a-tú la-biš me-lam-mu** 34 za-in bal-tu na- ši šá-lum-ma-tu ħi-it-lu-up nam-ri-r[i] ma- ħar Aššur bêli rabê ma-(?)diš im-ħur-ma i-ṭib ka-bat-ta- šû im-me-ru zi-mu- šû²²⁶

A cunningly made crown, symbol of the rule [of] Aššur, king of the gods, my lord, I caused to be made of red gold and precious stones, and I returned it to its place. That crown—dressed in light, adorned with dignity, possessed of glittering brightness, clothed with light—greatly pleased Aššur, the great lord; his heart was contented and his face glowed.²²⁷

The *melammu* that was awarded specifically to the king could be referred to as *melamme šarrûti*, the “*melammu* of kingship,” as in the text of Adad-nirari II mentioned above. One of the oldest attestations of this phrase appears in the epilogue to the Laws of Hammurapi. If the king in any way harms, alters, or breaks the divine law, the punishment includes the following:

melam šarrûti liṭeršu May he (Anu) deprive him of the *melammu* of kingship,
ḥaṭṭašu lišbir sîmâtišu lîrur break his staff, and curse his destiny.²²⁸

Although the epilogue does not specify that the *melam šarrûti* crowned the king or covered his head, this would be a reasonable conclusion, given the context of this curse. A disobedient king forfeits not only his staff (*ḥaṭṭum*) by which he rules. The principal sign of his legitimate kingship, the royal

is described as frightful and overwhelming to his enemies (*gal-tu me-lam-mu-šu ú-sa-aḫ-ḫa-pu na-gab za-ia-a-ri*). See Machinist, *Kingship and Divinity*, 160 line 12; 162. The tradition, however, is attested much earlier in Babylonia. See the example from the law code of Hammurapi, p. 161 below.

225. A. K. Grayson, *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium B.C. (1114–859 B.C.)* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 147. See also Oppenheim, “Akkadian *Pul(u)h(tu)* and *Melammu*,” 1, “they (the gods) give him sceptre, throne and the *palû* symbol and they adorn him with the royal *melammu*.”

226. R. Borger, *Die Inschriften Asarhaddons Königs von Assyrien* (AfOB 9; Graz, 1956), no. 53 lines 32b–34.

227. B. Porter, *Images, Power, and Politics: Figurative Aspects of Esarhaddon’s Babylonian Policy* (Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society 208; Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1993), 124. Winter, “Radiance as an Aesthetic Value,” 1994; and idem, “Aesthetics in Ancient Mesopotamia,” 2569–82.

228. Text from Martha T. Roth, *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor* (SBLWAW; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1995), col. 49, lines 45–52.

crown and the divinely ordained *melammu* it manifests, would also be revoked by the gods.²²⁹

In the Egyptian Opening of the Mouth, the image was initially naked.²³⁰ However, in Episodes 49–54 the priests are instructed to clothe the statue in beautiful, radiant garments. The *nms*, worn by gods and kings, was a white headdress adorned with gold, which, according to K. Goebis, symbolized solar rejuvenation.²³¹ In some cases, the statue was also given the *sj3 t* garment; the “beautiful” and “excellent” *mnḥ.t* garment, also referred to as “the beaming one”; and the terror-inducing *db3* dress of Renenutet, the goddess of harvest, granaries and flax.²³² The *ssm t* pearl apron, worn by Horus, Seth, and Thoth,²³³ was also listed in the *wpt-r* texts among the funerary clothing awarded to the deceased’s statue. The green (*w3d*) *mnḥ.t* garment was said to make its bearer excellent (*snhm*) and cause him to grow.²³⁴ The fiery red *ins* clothing, symbolizing kingship, divine strength, and protection was thought to renew those who wore it.²³⁵ Other *wpt-r* texts mention the dazzling and divinely spun *idmj* coat, the radiant and beautiful *wšḥ* broad collar, and the *wrr.t* crown.²³⁶ As with the “majestic crown” (*aga maḥ*) in the *mīs pī pīt pī*, the *wrr.t* crown was an indispensable part of the divine and royal wardrobe.²³⁷ It conveyed legitimate rule, divinely ordained power, authority over one’s enemies, and, in funerary contexts, it was associated with the rebirth of the deceased as a divine being.²³⁸ In the

229. See *Enūma Eliš* 1:67–68, in which Ea steals Apsu’s crown and its *melammu* and, thus, Apsu’s kingship.

230. Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 34.

231. *Nms*: Ibid., 110. See K. Goebis, “Untersuchungen zu Funktion und Symbolgehalt des *nms*,” *ZÄS* 122 (1995): 154–81, esp. p. 175–78; and *Crowns in Egyptian Funerary Literature: Royalty, Rebirth, and Destruction* (Oxford: Griffiths Institute, 2008), 90 and n. 203.

232. *Garment*: Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 112 line a. The specific type of garment is unknown, but it is mentioned in a list of royal clothing in PT 41b. *Beautiful and excellent*: Apparently, a white apron. See *ibid.*, 112–13, 114. *Beaming one*: p. 113. *Goddess of harvest, graineries, flax*: Ibid., 113 lines i–l.

233. Seth: Ibid., 114 lines b–c and remark 4. Thoth: Ibid., 114 line d.

234. Ibid., 116–17.

235. Ibid., 117–18. It also symbolizes the redness of the dawn. See Goebis, *Crowns*, 132.

236. *Coat*: Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 118 lines g–h and 119. *Collar*: Ibid., 119–20. The crown is mentioned earlier in Episode 46 in *ibid.*, 107 line k. The name of the crown indicates that its bearer is “a great one” (*wr*), from the verb *wr(r)* “(to be) great,” G. Fecht identified *wrr.t* as an imperative active participle of *wrr*, and thus it should be translated as “the one which is becoming greater” (*Wortakzent und Silbenstruktur: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der ägyptischen Sprache* [Ägyptologische Forschungen 21; Glückstadt, 1960] 176 n. 490.). In some contexts the *wrr.t* refers to the white crown, but, as Goebis has amply demonstrated, “its primary reference is to a specific *function* of the crown it designates. That function is to distinguish the ruler, god or deceased person in his arising, whether on the throne or in the sky, as a ‘great one.’ *Wrrt* may thus designate the Double Crown as well as the White and Red Crowns” (Goebis, *Crowns*, 109).

237. See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 193–95 and 203–4 lines 1ab–14ab. Goebis, *Crowns*, 35, 37.

238. *Power*: Ibid., 40, 79. *Enemies*: Ibid., 95. *Divine being*: Ibid., 38, 40, 73.

Opening of the Mouth specifically, the donning of the *wrr.t* crown signified that the transfiguration of the deceased into a god was complete.²³⁹ It endowed its bearer with an awe-inspiring luminosity comparable to the radiance emanating from the *wrr.t* crown of the sun god, Re, as he rises in the morning, and to the brightness of the morning star, making the deceased visible as a newly transformed deity.²⁴⁰

The image was then given its royal insignia: a braided whip, the powerful and fear-inspiring *šms* tamarisk scepter of Osiris and the mighty *ḥd* club. The latter was also known by the title, “hitter of the subservient (spirits)” (Schläger der Untertanen) because it was believed that it possessed the power to destroy one’s enemies.²⁴¹

4.7.4.2. The Crowning of Adam and Eve?

Up to this point, we have discussed several aspects of human creation in Genesis 2 that demonstrate Adam was described not only with royal language and imagery but also in terms reminiscent of the creation and animation of divine statues. Why, then, at the climax of the ritual when the Mesopotamian and Egyptian divine images are clothed with jewel-studded garments, insignia, and a radiant aura or luminous crown surrounding their heads, are Adam and Eve described as *naked* (*‘ārūmīm*) but *unashamed* (*wālō yitbōšāšu*)? The description of the first primordial pair in Psalm 8 may provide a clue.

4⁸: כִּי־אֲרָאָה שָׁמַיִךְ מַעֲשֵׂי אֲצַבְעֶיךָ יָרַח וְכוכְבִּים אֲשֶׁר כוֹנְנָתָה: 5⁸: מַה־אֲנוּשׁ
כִּי־תִזְכְּרֵנוּ וּבֶן־אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֵנוּ: 6⁸: וְתִחַסְרֵהוּ מַעַט מַאֲלֵהִים וְכָבוֹד וְהָדָר תַּעֲטֶרְהוּ:
7⁸: תִּמְשִׁילֵהוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדֶיךָ כֹּל שֶׁתָּה תַחַת־רַגְלֵיוֹ: 8⁸: צִנָּה וְאַלְפִים כָּלָם וְגַם בְּהֵמֹת שָׂדֵי:
9⁸: צִפּוֹר שָׁמַיִם וְדֹגֵי הַיָּם עֹבֵר אַרְחוֹת יָמִים:

4 When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have established, 5 what is humankind that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? 6 Yet you have made him a little lower than angels²⁴² and with glory and honor you crown him. 7 You give him dominion over the works of your hands; all things you have put under his feet, 8 flocks and cattle, all of them, and

239. Ibid., 73, 83.

240. *Luminosity*: ibid., 38, 42, 47, 58, 71–72. See the spell CT 794 in which the *wrr.t* crown makes the divine manifestation of the deceased “radiant in the realm of the dead” (ibid., 58). *Re*: ibid., 42. *Morning star*: ibid., 93–96, 98, 100. *Newly transformed deity*: ibid., 101–2.

241. *Whip*: Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 127. *Scepter*: ibid., 127 lines b–e. The *šms* scepter was an insignia of Osiris which was said to inspire awe in his enemies. See Goebis, *Crowns*, 64. *Power to destroy enemies*: Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*, 127 lines b–d.

242. Hebrew *‘ēlōhīm* refers to God (Gen 1; 6:12), or gods (Exod 18:11; 20:3; Josh 24: 2, 16). See also HALOT 1:53. The translations, both ancient and modern, are divided on how to render *‘ēlōhīm* in this psalm. Aquila and Symmachus use *theos* while the Old Greek, the Peshitta, the Targums, and the Vulgate translate it as “angels.” See Heb 2:7, which quotes Ps 8:6 and renders *‘ēlōhīm* with *angelous*, “angels.”

also the beasts of the field, 9 the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever traverses the paths of the seas.

According to Ps 8:6[5] Yahweh made humankind “a little lower than the angels,” crowned (‘*tr*) them with *kābôd* and *hādār* and granted them dominion (*tamšilēhû*) over all creation. The terms *kābôd* and *hādār* are usually rendered in English, “glory and honor,”²⁴³ but their significance is often lost in translation. The term *kābôd* can refer to abundance, honor, glory, and splendor.²⁴⁴ The glory of Yahweh is described in the Bible as a physical manifestation that is visible and audible²⁴⁵ to humans. It has substance and mass, it is mobile, and it has a sanctifying effect.²⁴⁶ In Exod 24:17, it is described as “a consuming fire” (‘*ēš ’ōkelet*), while Ezekiel compares its brightness (*nōgah*) to the luminosity of a rainbow.²⁴⁷ Similarly, *hādār* refers to honor, glory, majesty, splendor, and ornamentation.²⁴⁸ In the psalms it characterizes Yahweh’s work, his power, and his garments of light.²⁴⁹

In Ps 8:6, however, man is not said to be *clothed*²⁵⁰ with *glory and honor* but crowned (‘*tr*) with them. With his choice of the verb ‘*tr*, the psalmist emphasizes the focal point of the *kābôd* and *hādār* as the area above the shoulders surrounding the head, precisely where signature elements, divine symbols, and the *melammu* were located on Mesopotamian deities and kings.²⁵¹ It is also the exact location of the divine glory as it was manifest on Moses in Exod 34:29–35, whose face exuded a terrifying²⁵² sheen so bright (*qāran* ‘*ôr pānāw*) that he concealed it behind a veil for the sake of the people.²⁵³ I wonder, therefore, if the psalmist understood that, like Moses, Adam’s and Eve’s *heads*,²⁵⁴ and only their heads, were surrounded

243. ESV, NJPSV, KJV, NKJV, NIV, NLT, RSV, and NRSV. Note that the NASB and TNK translate *hādār* as “majesty” rather than “honor.”

244. Gen 31:1; 45:13; Ps 19:1; 21:6; 49:17; 63:3; Isa 4:2; Ezek 1:28; 43:2. See also HALOT 2:457–458.

245. *Visible*: Exod 16:7, 10; 24:16–17; Lev 9:6, 23; Num 16:19, 42; 17:7; 20:6; Isa 35:2; 40: 5; Ezek 1:28; 3:23; 8:4; 10:18–19; 39:21, etc. *Audible*: Ezek 3:12; 43:2.

246. *Mass*: 1 Kgs 8:11; 2 Chr 5:14; 7: 2; Ezek 43:5; 44:4. *Mobility*: Ezek 3:23; 9:3; 10:18; 11:23. *Sanctifying*: Exod 29:43.

247. *Brightness*: Ezek 10:4. *Rainbow*: Ezek 1:28.

248. Isa 2:10, 19, 21; 35:2; Ezek 16:14; 27: 10. See also HALOT 1:240.

249. Pss 90:16, 111:3; Ps 104:1–2, “Bless Yahweh, O my soul! Yahweh, my God, you are very great! With splendor (*hōd*) and majesty (*hādār*) you are clothed, enveloping yourself with light (‘*ôr*) as with a garment, stretching out the heavens like a tent.”

250. If clothing was intended we would expect the author to use *lbš*, “to clothe,” or possibly *hrg* or ‘*zr* “to gird,” *krbl* or *kbl*, “to be mantled,” or *ksh*, “to cover.” See Ps 104:1.

251. See Ps 21:3–5.

252. Exod 34:30 reports that the people were afraid to come near Moses because of his shining face.

253. Contra R. Friedman, who, following W. Propp, claims that Moses was veiled because his face had been disfigured, perhaps burned, by the divine presence (*Who Wrote the Bible?* [San Francisco, CA: Harper San Francisco, 1997] 201–2).

254. Adam and Eve would still be “naked” as described in Gen 2:25 if the glory covered *only* their heads and shoulders.

with a brilliant, dazzling light which was a physical manifestation of divine glory?²⁵⁵ If so, they, like Mesopotamian and Egyptian gods and kings, would have been endowed with the most significant element of the divine and royal wardrobe, the “crown” of glory, a type of *melam šarrûti*, which would have identified them as legitimate royal “images” of Yahweh and his appointed rulers over creation.²⁵⁶

4.7.4.3. *The Garments of Adam and Eve?*

The notion that the primordial pair donned some type of glorious covering is an ancient one. As noted above, already in Ps 8:6[5] Adam and Eve are described as crowned (*ʿtr*) with glory and splendor (*kābôd wəhādār*). Sir 49:16 (2nd century B.C.E.) mentions the splendor of Adam above all living creatures in a context which associates the high-priestly vestments of Simon son of Onias with Adam’s primordial glory (Eccl 50:1–11).²⁵⁷ Similarly, the *Damascus Document* (3.20) from Qumran claims, “Now those who remained steadfast in it (a safe home in Israel built by God) will acquire eternal life (*lhyy nšh*), and all the glory of Adam is for them (*wkl kbwd ʿdm lhm*).”²⁵⁸ Likewise, the Qumran *Community Rule* (1 QS 4. 22b–23a) states, “For those God has chosen for an everlasting covenant and for them is all the glory of Adam (*wlhm wkl kbwd ʿdm*).”²⁵⁹ Both of these texts from Qumran imply a belief among the Essenes that prior to the events of Gen 3:7, Adam possessed a measure of Yahweh’s glory which they themselves would inherit in the eschaton. Lambden comments, “It is a commonly held scholarly viewpoint that the Qumran Jews expected to receive (or had already in a certain measure proleptically received) a share of the ‘glory’ (*kbwd*) lost (?) by Adam.”²⁶⁰

The haggadic Targum Pseudo-Jonathan on Gen 3:21 indicates that the primordial pair lost the glory with which they were covered when they ate from the tree. Pseudo-Jonathan to Gen 2:25 reads, “And the two of them were wise (*hkymyn*), Adam and his wife, but they did not remain in their glory (*wl’ ʿmtynw byqrhwn*),” and to Gen 3:7, “the eyes of both of them were enlightened (*wʿtnhrn ʿyny trhyhwn*) and they knew that they were naked

255. Obviously, Gen 2 says nothing about light surrounding the heads of Adam and Eve. We will discuss this further below.

256. Does Gen 2:5–3:24 suggest that Adam and Eve were crowned with Yahweh’s glory? The possibility is discussed below in §4.7.6.

257. Sir 49:16 reads Σημ καὶ Σηθ ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἐδοξάσθησαν καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντων ζῶον ἐν τῇ κτίσει Ἀδάμ (“Shem and Seth were glorified among men, but Adam above every living being in the creation.”) See also S. Lambden, “From Figleaves to Fingernails: Some Notes on the Garments of Adam and Eve in the Hebrew Bible and Select Early Postbiblical Jewish Writings,” in *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical and Literary Images of Eden* (ed. Paul Morris and Deborah Sawyer; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992) 74–90, esp. pp. 79–80.

258. Florentino Garcia Martinez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 1:554–55, my emphasis.

259. *Ibid.*, 1:78–79, my emphasis.

260. S. Lambden, “From Figleaves to Fingernails,” 78.

because they were stripped of the clothing of fingernails in which they had been created.”²⁶¹ However, in Targum Neofiti and Targum Onqelos, the garments of glory were given to Adam and Eve only *after* they rebelled, just before Yahweh banished them from the garden.²⁶²

The idea that primordial man manifested Yahweh’s *kābôd* is also found in several other early Jewish works. The *Testament of Abraham* (1st–2nd century C.E.) describes Adam as marvelous (θαυμάσιος) and holy (ὅσιος),²⁶³ bedecked (κοσμούμενος; κοσμέω) in glory (δόξη) and seated on a golden, glorious throne.²⁶⁴ Like God, here referred to as τοῦ δεσπότου “the master,” Adam had a terrifying (φοβερά) appearance,²⁶⁵ reminiscent of the similarly frightening appearance of Moses in Exod 34:30 and the fear-inducing qualities of Akkadian *rašubbatu* and *melammu*.

The *Life of Adam and Eve* and its Greek version, the *Apocalypse of Moses*, further attest to the fact that early²⁶⁶ biblical interpreters presumed that Adam and Eve wore garments of glory. In the *Apocalypse* (V: 20: 1–3) Eve recounts the story of the serpent’s deception to her children:

(1)And in that very hour my eyes were opened and I knew that I was naked of the righteousness (δικαιοσύνης) with which I had been clothed (ἐνδεδυμένη), and I wept and said to him, (2)“Why have you done this, that I have been deprived of my glory with which I was clothed (ὅτι ἀπηνυλлотριώθην ἐκ τῆς δόξης μου ἣμην ἐνδεδυμένη)?” (V: 20: 1–3).²⁶⁷

The opening of the eyes and the realization of nakedness in Gen 3:7 are here interpreted as a loss of God’s glory (δόξη), which was manifest as a

261. The tradition that Adam and Eve were clothed in “nail-skin garments” (*lbws twpr*) may have been an interpretation of *kotnôt ’ôr* in Gen 3:21, or perhaps it was a conflation of ‘ôr, “skin,” with ’ôr, “light,” referring to the pearly, translucent quality of human fingernails. See Lambden, “From Figleaves to Fingernails,” 85–87; and M. S. C. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 26, n. 12.

262. *lbwsyn dyqr* in E. G. Clarke, with the collaboration of W. E. Aufrecht, J. C. Hurd, and F. Spitzer, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan of the Pentateuch: Text and Concordance* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1984); *lbwsyn d ’wqr* in A. Macho, *Neophyti I: Targum Palestinense Ms de la Biblioteca Vaticana, Tomo I, Gen* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1968); and *w’bd ywy ’lhym l’dm w’lytyh lbwsyn dyqr ’l mšk bsrhwn w’lbyšwn* in A. Sperber, *The Bible in Aramaic: The Pentateuch according to Targum Onkelos* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 5.

263. D. Allison Jr., *Testament of Abraham* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), 11:6.

264. *Ibid.*, 11:4, 6 8–9; 8:5.

265. On the identity of τοῦ δεσπότου as God, see *ibid.*, 246. *Appearance: ibid.*, 11:4.

266. See John R. Levison, *Texts in Transition: The Greek Life of Adam and Eve* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000); and more recently J. Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve in Greek: A Critical Edition* (Leiden: Brill, 2005). On the date of the *Life of Adam and Eve* and *Apocalypse of Moses* see M. de Jonge and J. Tromp, *The Life of Adam and Eve and Related Literature* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 65–78.

267. Translation of Text Forms 1A and II. Note that Text Forms 1 and III mention glory but do not refer to it explicitly as clothing. See John R. Levison, *Texts in Transition*, 73. Text and translation based on G. A. Anderson and M. E. Stone, eds., *A Synopsis of the Books of Adam and Eve* (2nd ed.; Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999), 58. See also John R. Levison, *Texts in Transition*, 73.

physical garment covering Eve’s body. Once she had eaten the fruit, the clothing was removed, leaving her fully exposed. In the same story, after Adam consumes the fruit, he responds to his wife, “O wicked woman! What have you done to us? You have deprived me of the glory of God (ἀπηλλοτριώσάς με ἐκ της δόξης του θεου).”²⁶⁸ Although Adam does not refer to the δόξη explicitly as a tangible garment, the text makes it clear that, once he ate from the tree, the glory was removed from him.

That Adam’s disobedience resulted in a loss of glory is stated explicitly in the later Greek *Apocalypse of Baruch* (3 *Baruch*; late 1st–early 2nd century C.E.),²⁶⁹ where the angel says:

Then know, Baruch, that just as Adam through this tree was condemned and was stripped (εγυμνώθη) of the glory of God (της δόξης θεου), thus men now who insatiably drink the wine deriving from it transgress worse than Adam, and become distant from the glory of God (της δόξης θεου).²⁷⁰

Although here δόξη is not equated explicitly with physical clothing, the text does say that Adam was *stripped naked* (εγυμνώθη),²⁷¹ suggesting that 3 *Baruch* understood Yahweh’s glory as a tangible covering that was revoked when he broke Yahweh’s law.

The idea that Adam and Eve were clothed in garments of glory is also prominent in rabbinic circles. In the commentary on the sin of Adam and Eve in *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer* the dress of primal man, that is, Adam, was said to be “a skin of nail (‘wr sl špwrn) and a cloud of glory covering him (w’nn kbwd mksh ‘lyw)” which was removed from him when he ate from the tree.²⁷² Elsewhere in rabbinic interpretation, however, it was the garments Yahweh made for Adam and Eve in Gen 3:21 *after the fall* that were interpreted as their glorious coverings. In *Num. Rab.* 4:8, the animal skins were considered priestly “robes of honor,” while *Gen. Rab.* 20:12 states that Gen 3:21 in the Torah scroll of Rabbi Meir has “garments of light,” reading ‘wr, “light,” instead of ‘wr, “skin.”” *Gen. Rab.* 20:12 adds, “this (‘wr) refers to Adam’s garments, which were like a torch [shedding radiance].”²⁷³

Samaritan literature also characterizes Adam and Eve as clothed initially in radiant vestments. The *Memar Marqah* (2nd–4th century C.E.)²⁷⁴ says of the first pair of humans:

268. Anderson and Stone, *Synopsis*, 61, 61E.

269. On the date of 3 *Baruch*, see D. Harlow, *The Greek Apocalypse of Baruch* (3 *Baruch*) in *Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 13–14.

270. 3 *Bar.* 4:16–17, my emphasis.

271. On γυμνός as “to strip naked,” see H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 363.

272. D. Börner-Klein, *Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004), 142–43 and n. 1. On the “skin of nail” see p. 166 n. 260 above.

273. *Midrash Rabbah* (trans. H. Freedman; 3rd ed.; London: Soncino, 1983), 171. See the skin (‘wr) of Moses’ face in Exod 34:30.

274. On the date of *Memar Marqah*, see J. MacDonald, *Memar Marqah: The Teaching of Marqah* (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1963) 1:20–22.

ʾlhwth šʿrt yth whnpht bh nšmt hyyh

The Divine One formed him and the breath of life was breathed into him.

wkbwdh kllh brwḥh gdyh whlbšw trywn try klylyn mn ʾwrh rbh

The Glory made him complete with a great spirit; the two of them were clad²⁷⁵ in two crowns of great light.

ʾlhwth yhnt bh mdʿ šlm wkbwdh yhb lh nhyrw hywlh

The Divine One put in him a perfect mind and the Glory gave him powerful illumination.²⁷⁶

As with the earlier Essenes at Qumran, the Samaritans believed that in the eschaton the righteous would inherit this brilliant crown of divine glory which Adam wore at creation.²⁷⁷

As demonstrated in this brief survey of early interpreters of Gen 2:5–3:24, my suggestion that Adam and Eve were initially crowned with Yahweh's glory, which was then stripped from them when they ate from the tree, is not original. Although I am offering new reasons for this interpretation, the idea that Adam and Eve wore Yahweh's *kābôd* has ancient roots and may even go back to the biblical period itself (Psalm 8). Despite the antiquity of this view, however, we must ask if there is any indication *in* Gen 2:5–3:24 itself that Adam and Eve were adorned with Yahweh's glory. This question will be addressed below in the commentary on Gen 3:7.

4.7.5. Genesis 3:5

כִּי יֵדַע אֱלֹהִים כִּי בַיּוֹם אֲכָלְכֶם מִמֶּנּוּ וְנִפְקְחוּ עֵינֵיכֶם וְהִיתֶם כְּאֱלֹהִים יֹדְעֵי טוֹב וָרָע:

For God knows that when you²⁷⁸ eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like gods,²⁷⁹ knowing good and evil.

4.7.5.1. The Opening of the Eyes

The animation of the sensory organs is one of the prime objectives of the *mīs pî* and the *wpt-r* because only then is the image fully alive and able to function properly. In the *mīs pî* the organ of primary emphasis was the mouth, but the opening of the eyes was an essential part of the animation

275. Although the verb used is *lbš*, “to clothe, cover or clad,” the objects are crowns (*klylyn*) rather than garments. Thus, perhaps we should render the Aramaic, “the two of them were arrayed in two crowns of great light.”

276. *Memar Marqah* 6:3 in MacDonald, *Memar Marqah*, 1:135–36, 221.

277. Lambden, “From Figleaves to Fingernails,” 88.

278. Note that the Hebrew verbs *ʾkl*, *pql*, *lyh*, and *ydʿ* are 2mp and that the noun *ʿênêkem* has a 2mp suffix. The serpent is either speaking to Eve alone but also referring to Adam, or he is addressing both of them directly. It is not clear from Gen 3:6, “Her husband who was with her,” if Adam was privy to his wife’s dialogue with the serpent or not.

279. Gen 3:22, where Yahweh says to his heavenly court, “the man has become like one of us (*kəʾaḥad mimmennû*), knowing good and evil,” suggests that the second *ʾēlōhîm* in Gen 3:5 refers to “gods.” Further, as J. Russell points out, the first *ʾēlōhîm* is the subject of a singular participle (*yōdēʿa*), while the second is paired with a plural participle (*yōdēʿē*). Hence, the second *ʾēlōhîm*, “gods,” plays on the first *ʾēlōhîm*, “god.”

process. The Babylon text mentions explicitly that the priest is to open the statue’s eye,²⁸⁰ while in the Nineveh version the opening of the eye is suggested by the repeated command to set the image’s eyes toward the rising sun.²⁸¹ In the *wpt-r* the opening of the eyes with various tools and balls of natron is mentioned and depicted explicitly in multiple scenes.²⁸² In some cases the ritual was even identified by its fuller title, “Opening of the Mouth and Eyes.”²⁸³

In the Eden story the opening of the eyes is likewise significant. The serpent claims, “For God knows that when you eat of it *your eyes will be opened* (*wənipqəḥû ‘ênêkem*), and you will be like gods (*wihyiytem kē’lōhîm*), knowing good and evil.”²⁸⁴ If the author of Genesis 2 was familiar with the *pīt pī* and perhaps the *wpt-r*, or, rather, simply the idea that the animation of the sensory organs was thought to enliven a divine statue, then his reference to the opening of the eyes and becoming like *’ēlōhîm* may have been a subtle allusion to this practice. In each case, the opening of the eyes was not only an act of animation but of divinization, or, in Gen 3:5–6, an attempt by Adam and Eve at divinization.

4.7.5.2. *Becoming like ’ēlōhîm*

Although the serpent was correct that Adam and Eve’s eyes would be opened and they would become like *’ēlōhîm*, his promise that they could disobey Yahweh and live was a lie. In the mouth-washing and mouth-opening rituals, the animation of the sensory organs, including the opening of the eyes, was a necessary part of the process by which the statue was transformed into the divine. In Genesis 3, the opening of Adam and Eve’s eyes did result in god-likeness (Gen 3:22), but this particular likeness to God was prohibited. Unlike the divine statue in Mesopotamia, which became an *ilu* by means of the *mīs pī* ritual, and the Egyptian mummy which was transformed through the *wpt-r* into a manifestation of Osiris, humans were not created *to be* gods. This is perhaps the most significant difference between the creation of a divine statue according to the *mīs pī pīt pī* and the *wpt-r* and the creation of humans in the Eden story.

4.7.6. *Genesis 3:7*

וַתִּפְקְחָה עֵינֵי שְׁנֵיהֶם וַיֵּדְעוּ כִּי עִרְמָם הֵם וַיִּתְּפְרוּ עֲלֵה תְּאֵנָה וַיַּעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם חֲגֹרֹת׃

280. in *ili šuāti tepette*, “you open the eye of that god,” in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 76, 80 line 53. See also Berlejung, “Washing the Mouth,” 66–67 and n. 82.

281. *inešu ana šit šamši tašakkamma* in Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 59 line 97 and n. 82.

282. Otto Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual, 44, 47, 78 line a; 80 lines 2–7, 15, 22; 81 line a; 84 lines a, n; 91–92 lines a, d–e, h; 95 lines a, c; 96 lines b–d; 100 lines b–d; 106 line a; 110 line a; 112 line a; 126 line a; 127 line a; 129 line d; 138 line d.

283. D. Lorton, “The Theology of Cult Statues in Ancient Egypt,” in *Born in Heaven Made on Earth: The Making of the Cult Image in the Ancient Near East* (ed. Michael Dick; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999) 123–210, esp. p. 147, my emphasis.

284. My emphasis.

Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed together fig leaves and made for themselves loincloths.

The woman is aware of Yahweh's command prohibiting the consumption of fruit from the tree of knowledge (Gen 2:17) and the deadly consequences for disobedience, but the serpent assures her that the key to divine likeness lies in eating the forbidden fruit. Specifically, he states, "You surely will not die! For God knows that on the day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened and you will become like Elohîm, knowing good and evil" (Gen 3:4b-5). When the woman and her husband succumb to temptation, they find that the serpent's words were true.²⁸⁵ Their eyes were opened and they became, according to Yahweh himself, "like one of us, knowing good and evil" (Gen 3:22).

Clearly, Adam and Eve's nakedness was related to their disobedience. When Yahweh questions Adam as to his whereabouts, the man replies, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, *because I was naked* (*kî 'êrom 'ânôkî*) and I hid myself." (3:10) Yahweh responds, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" Above, I suggested that perhaps Adam and Eve, although without garments to cover their bodies and therefore naked, may have been understood by the author of Gen 2:5-3:24 as crowned with the radiant splendor of Yahweh, similar to the manifestation of glory on the face of Moses in Exod 34:29-35, to the luminous Egyptian *wrr.t* crown, and the *melammu* which graced the heads of Assyrian and Babylonian kings and divine statues. I also presented the evidence which demonstrates that this *melammu* bestowed on kings was not necessarily permanent. If the king broke the divine law, his *melam šarrûti* could be removed by the gods, thereby revoking his kingship.

Should we thus, with many of the early Jewish interpreters noted above, understand Adam and Eve's realization of their nakedness as a loss of glory? Perhaps the author of Genesis 2 did intend his audience to conclude that, at the moment of Adam and Eve's rebellion, Yahweh stripped them of the *kābôd* and *hādār* with which they had been endowed (Ps 8:6),²⁸⁶ but I readily acknowledge that this is not mentioned explicitly in Genesis 3. Adam and Eve's attempt to cover their nakedness with fig leaves (Gen 3:7) was unsuccessful, as made clear in Gen 3:10-11. It is curious that, even after he has covered himself with foliage, Adam declares that he is naked (*'êrôm 'ânôkî* in Gen 3:10). His statement is perhaps best understood as a declaration of the leaves' inadequacy as a covering. This would have been especially so *if* he had been clothed and/or crowned previously with divine glory.

285. See R. W. L. Moberly, "Did the Serpent Get it Right?," *JTS* 39 (1988) 1-27.

286. See Job 19:9, where the removal (Hiphil of *sûr*) of the crown (*'teret*) from one's head is equated with being stripped of glory (*kābôd*).

**4.8. Comparison of Nineveh and Babylon Versions of the
mīs pî pīt pî, the Egyptian wpt-r from
the Tomb of Rekhmire, and Genesis 2:5–3:24²⁸⁷**

<i>mīs pî pīt pî</i> (Nineveh)	<i>mīs pî pīt pî</i> (Babylon)	<i>wpt-r</i>	Gen 2:5–2:34
<i>Purification of Image</i>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleansing with water • Purifying with natron • Second purification with natron (statue as newborn) • Censing of statue (established with brother gods, animation of nose), purification complete 	
<i>Preparations in the City, Countryside, Garden and Temple</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • marker set up for later placement of statue toward sunrise • reed huts for deities constructed at riverbank • water drawn for 7 basins set up on riverbank • fills holy-water basin of mouth-washing in temple of Kusu 			
<i>Temple Workshop</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cleansed and purified workshop • offerings made • image addressed as <i>ilu</i>, receives first offering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two holy-water vessels set up • offerings made • mouth-washing • incantation: “Born in heaven by your own power” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outline of statue divinely revealed to priest • priest asks sculptors to make the statue • sculptors hew the statue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yahweh Elohim forms the man from dust of the ground, animated him with breath of life, sensory • organs and limbs animate

287. This table is a summary only. My comments on the nature of the relationship between the *mīs pî*, the *wpt-r*, and Gen 2:5–3:24 are in this section and and §6.2, below.

<i>mīs pî pīt pî</i> (Nineveh)	<i>mīs pî pīt pî</i> (Babylon)	<i>wpt-r</i>	Gen 2:5–2:34
<i>Temple Workshop (cont.)</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mouth-washing and mouth-opening performed • image purified • incantation: “In heaven by your own power you emerge” • image addressed: “From today you go before Ea, your father” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • image addressed: “From today you go before Ea, your father” 		
<i>Transition from Inside to Outside (Procession from bīt mummi to River)</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • craftsmen escort statue from <i>bīt mummi</i> to riverbank in the <i>šēru</i> • priest proclaims purity and supernatural quality of wood • craft deities form the image 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • craftsmen escort statue from <i>bīt mummi</i> to riverbank, no <i>šēru</i> • priest proclaims purity and supernatural quality of wood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priest changes clothes • priest and statue leave workshop and go outside 	
<i>At the Riverbank</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ea and Asalluḫi and new image seated in orchard and fed • craftsmen return tools to Ea via river • mouth-washing performed, incantation: “He who comes, his mouth is washed . . . with his brothers let him be counted” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ea and Asalluḫi and new image seated in orchard and fed, new image faces sunset • craftsmen return tools to Ea via river • mouth-washing performed, incantation: “He who comes, his mouth is washed” 		
<i>Procession from River to Garden</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • image escorted into garden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • image escorted into garden 		

<i>mīs pî pīt pî</i> (Nineveh)	<i>mīs pî pīt pî</i> (Babylon)	<i>wpt-r</i>	Gen 2:5–2:34
<i>In the Garden (Day One)</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • image seated on mat amidst reed huts and standards • sets eyes toward sunrise • craftsmen’s equipment laid down • offerings made 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • image seated on mat amidst reed huts and standards • sets eyes toward sunrise • offerings made • priest draws water for 7 holy water basins and puts them in Kusu temple • priest prepares holy water basin of mouth-washing • priest fills tamarisk trough and places it on brick of • Dingir-maḥ • mouth-washing performed • additional offerings made to various deities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opening of mouth and eyes with sacrificed animals, a curved blade, iron blades • statue presented and declared complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yahweh Elohim plants a garden
<i>In the Garden (Day Two)</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set up 3 thrones, 3 tables for Ea, Shamash, and Asalluḫi • make offerings • craftsmen deities mentioned • priest recites incantations: “Born in heaven by his own power “and incantations to Shamash, Ea, and Asalluḫi -offerings made to craft deities • priest performs mouth-washing and mouth-opening • offerings presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set up 3 thrones, 3 tables for Ea, Shamash, and Asalluḫi -make offerings • priest recites incantations: “Born in heaven by his own power “and incantations to Shamash, Ea, and Asalluḫi • priest performs mouth-washing • incantation: “On the day when the god was created” • priest performs mouth-washing • human craftsmen denounce contribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opening of the mouth and eyes with blade and finger, little finger, four <i>abet</i> tools • offering of bull foreleg and heart to the statue • opening of mouth by priest using iron • blades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adam and Eve crowned?

<i>mīs pî pīt pî</i> (Nineveh)	<i>mīs pî pīt pî</i> (Babylon)	<i>wpt-r</i>	Gen 2:5–2:34
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> incantation: “On the day when the god was created” priest performs mouth-washing and mouth-opening priest whispers into god’s ears, god exhorted to approach its temple human craftsmen denounce contribution series of incantations recited, including “Statue born in a pure place” and “Statue born in heaven” statue given clothes, crown, and throne offerings dismantled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> priest opens the god’s eye series of incantations recited, including “Statue born in a pure place” and “Statue born in heaven” statue given clothes, crown, and throne offerings dismantled 		
<i>Procession from Orchard to Temple Gate</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest of nineveh vrs lost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> statue escorted to its temple 		
<i>At the Temple Gate</i>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> priest makes offering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> priest performs many transfigurations 	
<i>Procession from Temple Gate to Holy of Holies</i>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> statue seated and fed offerings made to Ea and Asalluḫi priest performs mouth-washing statue purified additional garments or insignia given 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clothing and adorning of statue statue fed statue transported to garden shrine and installed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yahweh Elohim provides food for the man and the woman Yahweh Elohim installs the man in the garden (garden-temple?)

<i>mīs pī pīt pī</i> (Nineveh)	<i>mīs pī pīt pī</i> (Babylon)	<i>wpt-r</i>	Gen 2:5–2:34
<i>To the Quay</i>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purification rituals performed 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eyes of Adam and Eve opened, became like <i>ʾēlōhīm</i> • realization of nakedness: clothing/crown removed? • “uninstalled” from garden- temple

4.9. Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter, I set out to define *ṣelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27 and to determine whether or not these same concepts, despite the absence of the terms themselves, were present in the Eden story. Based on its usage in Genesis, the meaning of its Akkadian cognate *ṣalmu* in comparable contexts, the structure of Gen 1:11–27, and the idea of Yahweh as father in the Hebrew Bible, I concluded that *ṣelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27 define the divine human relationship in terms of kin, king, and cult. To be created *bāṣelem ʾēlōhīm* suggests that humankind is, on some level, in a filial relationship with God, that humans are his appointed rulers over creation, and, in contrast to an inert divine statue, inert divine statue, despite what the *mīs pī pīt pī* and the *wpt-r* claim, that they are living “images” of Elohīm.

We then turned to Gen 2:5–3:24 to determine whether the Eden story was equally interested in the idea of humankind as created *bāṣelem ʾēlōhīm*, and in the themes of kin, king, and cult. Indeed, kinship is attested in Genesis 2 and the horizontal relationship between Adam and Eve serves as a complement to the vertical relationship between God and humans as in Genesis 1. Humanity’s kingship is also present in Genesis 2, as indicated by Adam’s installation as royal gardener. However, of the three themes in Gen 2:5–3:24, the greatest emphasis seemed to be placed on Adam as an image. This was suggested by the parallels among Gen 2:5–3:24, the *mīs pī pīt pī* and the *wpt-r*, and by their similarities in general sequence of events and overall purpose.

At this point, we must inquire as to the nature of the author’s knowledge. Did the Eden author have only a general awareness of the manufacture of divine statues and of the ritual means by which they were created, or is there any indication in Gen 2:5–3:24 that he knew the mouth-washing and mouth-opening texts firsthand? The connections among the *mīs pī pīt pī*, the *wpt-r*, and Gen 2:5–3:24, discussed above (§§4.7, 4.8), do, I contend,

indicate a historical relationship. They suggest that the Eden author not only knew how divine statues were made but understood the ritual means by which they were activated. Unlike our analysis of the relationship between the *mīs pî pīt pî* and the *wpt-r*, in which we had no explicit evidence of contact between the two sources, there is one feature of Gen 2:5–3:24 in particular that indicates that the Eden author had personal knowledge of the *pīt pî* (and/or the *wpt-r*), as Dick argued for Second Isaiah (§1.3). As discussed already in §4.7.1, the creation and then placement of the first human in a sacred (temple-) garden is unparalleled among human creation stories from the ancient Near East. The Sumerian and Babylonian accounts set newly created humankind in the cities where they were assigned the tasks of building shrines and digging canals. Who, in the ancient Near East, was animated and fed in a sacred garden? Whose eyes were opened as a means to divinity? In other words, because Adam is animated, placed/installed and fed in a sacred garden, possibly crowned with glory, and through the opening of his eyes he becomes like God (*ʾēlōhīm*), his creation seems to be more closely aligned with the creation of divine images in the *mīs pî pīt pî* than with the humans that we see, for example, in the Sumerian stories of “Enki and Ninmaḫ” and the “Song of the Hoe,” and in the Babylonian *Atrahasis Epic* and *Enūma Eliš*, despite Adam’s creation from the dust of the ground in Gen 2:7. When viewed in their current context and as a whole, Gen 2:8–14, 15, 25, and 3:5, 7, recall the rituals for the creation, animation and installation of a divine image from Mesopotamia and Egypt. The fact that we do not have an overt reference to the mouth-washing or mouth-opening ceremonies in Gen 2:5–3:24 should not prevent us from asserting the possibility, although not the certainty, of an historic relationship among the texts.

We then must ask why the Eden author would have drawn this comparison between humankind and divine images. I propose that his primary purpose for incorporating aspects of divine statue animation rituals was to introduce an innovative understanding of the divine-human relationship. According to Gen 2:5–3:24, humans were created to reside with God in the most sacred place, (the garden of) Eden. This divine plan was thwarted, however, and Adam and Eve were cast out of the garden. Thus, despite its glorious beginning, the Eden story ends on a tragic note. This is, perhaps, the most significant difference between the creation of divine statues according to the *mīs pî pīt pî* and the re-creation of the deceased in the *wpt-r*, on the one hand, and the creation of humans in Gen 2:5–3:24, on the other. The *mīs pî pīt pî* sought to make the divine presence manifest and then clothed, fed, and installed this particular manifestation, the divine statue, in its temple. Similarly, in Egypt it was through the mummy’s rebirth during the *wpt-r* that the presence of Osiris was manifest in the tomb. In Eden, however, the order of events was reversed. Adam and Eve dwelt in the divine presence at creation, having been placed and perhaps installed

in the garden of Eden, which may have been a temple-type of Yahweh. Fruit was provided in abundance, and they may have even been “crowned” with the very glory of Yahweh himself. All of this was lost, however, when their eyes were opened. Rather than dwelling in the divine presence for which they were created, they would have to survive apart from it, with only animal skins for clothing instead of divine glory, and without a constant supply of easily accessible food. Now only by hard labor would they have enough to eat (Gen 3:19).

Finally, both the *pīt pī* specifically and the *wpt-r* were rituals of *animation*, bringing the images *to life*. By the end of each rite, the statues were considered divine manifestations. Adam, however, was instantaneously enlivened at his creation by the breath of Yahweh. When he rebelled, not only was his position as caretaker and watchman of the garden forfeit, but his life was as well. By the end of the story, he and his wife are no longer royal figures in the garden of God but mortals, now in decay, void of glory, forced to live out their days in pain and toil isolated from the divine presence.

In the present study of Gen 1:1–2:3 and Gen 2:5–3:24, I have demonstrated that, despite the obvious differences between the two stories, both are concerned with the identification of humankind as an image of God. The presence of this common theme, however, and the themes of kinship and kingship attested in both accounts, do not indicate the nature of their relationship. Did the Eden author know Gen 1:1–2:3? Conversely, does Gen 1:26–27 function as a later, explicit statement of what was already implicit in Gen 2:5–3:24? These complex questions regarding the relationship between Gen 1:1–2:3 and Gen 2:5–3:24 will be the subject of the following chapter. Chapter 5 will also address the equally difficult questions concerning their date of composition and authorship.

Chapter 5

The Relationship between Genesis 1:1–2:3 and Genesis 2:5–3:24

5.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, we saw that Gen 1:1–2:3, dealing with the creation of the world, including humanity, and Gen 2:5–3:24, the Eden story, are connected by themes of kinship, kingship, and the identification of human beings as images of God. These common themes, however, do not answer the questions posed in chapter 1 about the nature of the relationship between the two accounts. Who wrote these stories, and when? What sources did they use? Do Gen 1:2–2:3 and 2:5–3:24 represent two distinct creation traditions in ancient Israel? Alternatively, is the Eden story the sequel to Gen 1:1–2:3, or is it, rather, a critical commentary on Gen 1:1–2:3, as Schüle maintains?¹ In order to address these questions, I will begin with a brief survey of the source-critical history of Gen 1:1–2:3, followed by a discussion on the date and authorship of the text. I will then review the source-critical history and the date and authorship of Gen 2:5–3:24. Although this presentation is necessarily brief, this glimpse into the source-critical history of these two stories and the complex issues of their date and authorship is sufficient to demonstrate how little we know for certain about the history of these texts.

5.2. Sources for Genesis 1:1–2:3

With the exception of a few minor glosses and the modification of a few phrases, many scholars have understood the present text of Gen 1:1–2:4a to be a unified literary creation, nearly identical to its original form, of a single Priestly tradent or school (P). However, the same cannot be said for its literary prehistory, where most scholars see evidence of at least two sources behind the present text.

Gunkel argued that the author reworked and transmitted much older, nonnative, and originally polytheistic oral traditions.² He posited that behind Genesis 1 lie two myths: an ancient Babylonian creation myth, in which order was created from chaos, and a non-Israelite primordial peace

1. A. Schüle, "Made in the 'Image of God': The Concepts of Divine Images in Gen 1–3," *ZAW* 117 (2005) 1–20, esp. p. 19.

2. H. Gunkel, *Genesis* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), 2, 119, 121; idem, *Creation and Chaos in the Primeval Era and the Eschaton: A Religio-Historical Study of Genesis 1 and Revelation 12* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 3–12, 78–111.

myth. Both would have been transmitted to Canaan and eventually adopted by Israel during the early monarchy, at which time they would have been purged of their polytheism and much of their mythological character.³ P (the Priestly writer) would then have inherited this radically altered, monotheistic version of the combined myths and reworked it yet again, recasting creation in a six-day framework designed to explain the Sabbath.⁴ Gunkel concludes, “Gen 1 is an extremely peculiar mixture of older and younger elements which can only be explained by a long history of tradition.”⁵

Along similar lines, Morgenstern concluded that two versions of Genesis 1 were combined to form the present text. The original account he termed the “divine-fiat” version, “a simple story of the creation of the universe by means of divine mandates uttered by a deity.”⁶ It would have included Gen 1:3⁷, 4b, 5a, 6, 7b, 8a, 9, 10a, 11 (in its original form), 14–15 (in their original form), 20 (in its original form), 24 (in its original form), the original account of human creation underlying Gen 1:26–30, and 2:1.⁸ He claimed, following Gunkel, that this original account would have been influenced indirectly by the Babylonian creation story but was written primarily from an earlier Israelite creation account which had been demythologized by P.⁹ The secondary “Sabbath” version consisted of Gen 1:2, 4a, 5b, 7a, 8b, 10b, 12, 13, 16–19, 21, 23, 25, 26–30, 31, and 2:2–3,¹⁰ all of which were considered secondary additions designed to introduce the Sabbath as a divinely instituted day of rest for humanity.¹¹ M. Lambert, responding to Morgenstern, suggested that the order be reversed.¹² He argued that source A (for “acts,” Morgenstern’s “Sabbath” version) would be earlier than source W (for “words,” Morgenstern’s “divine-fiat” version), based on the former’s anthropomorphic tendencies and its scientific *naïveté*.¹³

Von Rad also posited two sources for Genesis 1: A, an earlier creation by act (“action-account”) that would have been reworked over time,¹⁴ and B,

3. Idem, *Genesis*, 132; idem, *Creation and Chaos*, 78.

4. Idem, *Genesis*, 120–33.

5. Ibid., 132.

6. See J. Morgenstern, “The Sources of the Creation Story,” *AJSL* 36 (1919–20), 225–40.

7. Morgenstern acknowledges that Gen 1:3 would be an abrupt start to the story. He posits that the original beginning has been suppressed for unknown reasons (ibid., 202).

8. Ibid., 181.

9. Ibid., 207.

10. Morgenstern attributes 1:26–30 to secondary sources and the opening verse, 1:1, to a redactor he names RJEDP (ibid., 202). Ibid., 174–75, 180, 195. All references to the Sabbath were considered later additions in part because they seem to interrupt the context and continuity of the main narrative (ibid., 180).

11. Ibid., 203.

12. M. Lambert, “A Study of the First Chapter of Genesis,” *HUCA* 1 (1924) 3–12.

13. Ibid., 4.

14. Von Rad, *Genesis*, 64. von Rad cites as an example the 7-day creation scheme that was imposed on the older material. He comments “There must be here an important

a later, more theologically sophisticated creation by word ("command account"). The A and B accounts would have been combined and cast into a seven-day schema.¹⁵

Similarly, Westermann referred to the two distinct sources of Genesis 1 as an earlier "creation-by-action" (*Tatbericht*) account, which itself supposedly originated from multiple pre-Israelite oral sources,¹⁶ and a "creation-by-word" (*Wortbericht*) account. The latter would have consisted of P's own words and phrases, such as *wayyō'mer 'ēlōhîm* ("and God said"), *wayhî 'ereb* ("and it was evening"), and *wayyar' 'lohim kî tōb* ("and God saw that it was good"), by which he organized and framed the received tradition (the "creation-by-action" account).¹⁷

The strengths of these proposals lie in their recognition that Genesis 1 demonstrates an awareness of other Near Eastern creation accounts, or at least a familiarity with creation traditions common to the Near East. The creation of humankind in the image and likeness of God demonstrates the author's familiarity with Near Eastern royal ideology, specifically the notion that the king was, on some level, an image of the god. Moreover, these theories rightly note several distinctive aspects of the biblical creation account, such as its lack of mythology and its seven-day framework. However, Gunkel, Morgenstern, and Lambert have largely ignored the possibility that the influence from Mesopotamia may have been negative. G. Hermerén describes negative influence as follows:

If X had a negative influence on the creation of Y, then X has, metaphorically speaking, been a repelling factor; the creator of Y saw or read X and reacted against it, and this contact with X caused him to make a work which in certain respects is markedly different from X. If X influenced Y negatively, then Y was created as a protest against X. We can therefore expect Y to be the antithesis of X in a number of respects; in this sense X and Y are systematically different.¹⁸

He also gives the following corollaries regarding positive and negative influence:

concern of faith which would force on the ancient material an element that until then was so strange to it; the inclusion of the events of creation within the course of a series of days provides the last possible delimitation to every kind of mythical thinking" (ibid., 64–65).

15. Ibid.

16. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Continental Commentary*, 83–85. See A. H. Sayce, "The Egyptian Background of Genesis 1," in *Studies Presented to F. L. L. Griffith* (London: Oxford University Press, 1932) 419–23; and J. Hoffmeier, "Some Thoughts on Genesis 1 and 2 and Egyptian Cosmology," *JANES* 15 (1983) 39–49; both cite numerous parallels between Gen 1–2 and Egyptian cosmologies, such as creation out of preexisting chaos, creation by divine fiat, a firmament of metal, and the creation of man from clay and divine breath, suggesting that at least some of the source material for Gen 1 and 2 may be traced to ancient Egypt.

17. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Continental Commentary*, 83–85.

18. G. Hermerén, *Influence in Art and Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 42.

If X influenced the creation of Y positively with respect to *a*, then X and Y are similar in this respect.

If X influenced the creation of Y negatively with respect to *a*, then X and Y are systematically different with respect to *a*.¹⁹

The application of *šelem* to humankind in Gen 1:26–27 may be an example of both positive and negative influence. That is, X (ancient Near Eastern royal ideology, the *mis pî pî pî pî*, the *wpt-r*) may have influenced Y (Gen 1:26–27) positively with respect to *a* (*šelem*), in that *a* (*šelem*) in Gen 1:26–27 reflects the idea that king was the royal-divine son created in the god's image. However, X (ancient Near Eastern royal ideology and creation myths, *mis pî pî pî pî*, the *wpt-r*) may have also influenced Y (Gen 1:26–27) negatively with respect to *a* (*šelem*), in that Y's democratization of *šelem* to humanity in general may be a reaction against an aspect of X (ancient Near Eastern royal ideology) in which kings alone bore the identity of royal-divine son. Y (Gen 1:26–27) could also be reacting to the idea of a *šelem* in X (*mis pî pî pî pî*) as a divine manifestation and hence redefining it as a living human being.

In the end, we must acknowledge that there is no verification for the theories that claim preexisting creation accounts, whether a non-Israelite primordial peace myth, a divine-fiat account, or a creation-by-act account, were combined with a demythologized version of the Babylonian *Enūma Eliš* or a creation-by-command story to create the current form of Gen 1:1–2:3.²⁰ Nor can I demonstrate its dependence, directly or indirectly, on Egyptian sources, despite the parallels noted by Sayce, Williams, Killian, and Hoffmeier (see §1.8, above). Undoubtedly, the biblical author was familiar with the mythological literature of his day, but what his sources of influence contained, whether they were written and/or oral, the delineation of these sources within the present text of Genesis 1, and their place of origin—whether Egypt, Mesopotamia, Canaan, and/or ancient Israel—is, regrettably, beyond our present knowledge. What we can say with reasonable certainty is that the author was familiar with Near Eastern creation and royal traditions and that he incorporated selected aspects of these traditions in writing his own distinctive account of creation. The result was a text that, unlike other creation accounts from the ancient Near East, presented the creation of the world in a seven-day schema, which credited Elohim alone with the creation of the world,²¹ and which described humankind, on some level, as like a “royal son” of God.

19. Ibid., 194.

20. It is possible that Gen 1:1–2:3 and *Enūma Eliš* shared a common source that has not survived and, therefore, that *Enūma Eliš* did not influence Gen 1 at all. That is, *Enūma Eliš* would be a cousin text rather than the parent text.

21. Although in Gen 1:26, Elohim does not act alone when he when he creates humanity (*na'āšeh*).

5.3. Date and Authorship of Genesis 1:1–2:3

Since Wellhausen's *Geschichte Israels* (1878), scholars have generally accepted the notion that the first creation account in the Hebrew Bible was the product of P, either a 6th-century B.C.E. Priestly literary source or a Priestly tradent or school responsible for arranging, editing, and supplementing JED during the Postexilic Period with Priestly material.²² P is identified by its concern for cultic legislation, its emphasis on the Sabbath, its concern with numbers and measure, matters of purity and holiness, genealogical detail, the linear movement of time, its consistent use of Elohim for the divine name, its lack of anthropomorphic descriptions of the deity, distinctive vocabulary (*tôladôt*, *bārā'*, and *bərît*), and its orderly, schematic, and pedantic style.²³ The criteria for identifying P and its postexilic date have been well accepted by critical biblical scholars for nearly a century, but these standards and the reasons for a late date are not without their problems.

Y. Kaufmann wrote a detailed response to the late dating of P in his *The Religion of Israel*.²⁴ He accepts the notion that the Pentateuch was composed of the four strands JED and P, but he argues for a preexilic date for P. He claims that P's silence on the issue of centralized worship suggests not that P assumed centralization, as Wellhausen argued, but that P was unaware of it because P predated D, in which centralized worship was prescribed.²⁵ In P, worship took place at the portable tent shrine precisely because it had not yet been centralized.²⁶ Moreover, Kaufmann argues further that P indicates no awareness of D's ban on worship at the high places or its centralization of festival celebrations, thus reflecting its early date.²⁷ For these reasons Kaufmann concludes that J/E and P antedate D. That is, J, E, and P had to have been composed prior to the 7th century B.C.E.²⁸

Kaufmann was followed by several other Jewish scholars who have argued for a preexilic setting for P. Haran claims that not only was the material used by P preexilic, but that the document itself, and the Pentateuch as a whole, was canonized prior to exile.²⁹ It emerged from within the Jerusa-

22. Source: Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?* 188–206. School: F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973) 293–325. Prior to Wellhausen, P was considered among the oldest sources for the Pentateuch. See W. M. L. de Wette, *Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Alte Testament* (Halle: Schimmelpfennig, 1806–7).

23. Descriptions of deity: R. Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible*, 191, 217. For a list of linguistic features of P, see R. Polzin, *Late Biblical Hebrew: Toward an Historical Typology of Biblical Hebrew Prose* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1976), 85–122.

24. Y. Kaufman, *The Religion of Israel: From Its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile* (New York: Schocken, 1972).

25. *Ibid.*, 176.

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Ibid.*, 178–79.

28. *Ibid.*, 208.

29. M. Haran, *Temple and Temple Service in Ancient Israel* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1985), 5, 6. See also M. Haran, "Shiloh and Jerusalem: The Origin of the Priestly Tradition

lemite priesthood, he claims, during the cultic reforms of Hezekiah (2 Kgs 18:4, 22), when worship was centralized at the temple.³⁰ His conclusions are based largely on his understanding that P reflects a preexilic setting.³¹ He comments, "it is much simpler and more direct to accept that a literary corpus, the whole content of which rests on preexilic conditions, is a product of that same time than to assume that it is a late work in which the presence of features more suited to the First Temple period has to be explained as a restoration of archaic 'relics.'"³² However, Haran concedes that P had little to no impact on Israel's religious life until the Postexilic Period. This is not because P was composed in exile but, rather, because it was published and therefore made known to the populace only during the days of Ezra.³³ Although most scholars would agree with Haran that P contains preexilic material,³⁴ it is problematic to assign a date to the final form of a text based on its content. The "signs of antiquity ingrained in P"³⁵ do, I agree, demonstrate the presence of early material, but they do not verify a preexilic date for the entire document.

Hurvitz claims a preexilic date for P on linguistic grounds.³⁶ Through a detailed study of technical terms and idioms, he demonstrates that the language in P both contrasts with an exilic or postexilic setting and reflects the preexilic period.³⁷ He concludes, "What can be . . . stated with certainty . . . is that from a chronological-linguistic point of view, what there is in P is early (= preexilic) and what is missing is distinctively late (= exilic and post-exilic)."³⁸ This view is echoed in the works of Zevit, J. Milgrom, and G. Rendsburg all of whom maintain a preexilic date for P.³⁹

in the Pentateuch," *JBL* 81 (1962): 14–24; and M. Haran, "Behind the Scenes of History: Determining the Date of the Priestly Source," *JBL* 100 (1981), 321–33.

30. Haran, "Behind the Scenes," esp. pp. 331–33.

31. See Haran, *Temples and Temple Service*, 5–12.

32. *Ibid.*, 8.

33. *Idem*, "Behind the Scenes," 327; *idem*, *Temple and Temple Service*, 10, 12.

34. See, for example, Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 321–22, 324–25; P. Bird, "'Male and Female He Created Them': Gen 1:27b in the Context of the Priestly Account of Creation," *HTR* 74 (1981): 129–59, esp. p. 143, n. 37; and B. W. Anderson, "The Cult of Israel" (review of Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into the Character of Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School*), *Interpretation* 35 (1981): 410–12, esp. p. 412.

35. *Idem*, *Behind the Scenes*, 327.

36. A. Hurvitz, "The Usage of שש and ייך the Bible and Its Implications for the Date of P," *HTR* 60 (1967), 117–21; *idem*, "The Evidence of Language in Dating the Priestly Code: A Linguistic Study in Technical Idioms and Terminology," *RB* 81 (1974), 24–56, A. Hurvitz, "Dating the Priestly Source in Light of the Historical Study of Biblical Hebrew a Century After Wellhausen," *ZAW* 100 (1988) 88–100. See also Rendsburg, "Late Biblical Hebrew," 65–80.

37. Hurvitz, "The Evidence of Language"; *idem*, "Dating the Priestly Source."

38. *Idem*, "The Evidence of Language," 54.

39. Z. Zevit, "Converging Lines of Evidence Bearing on the Date of P," *ZAW* 94 (1982), 481–511. J. Milgrom, "The Antiquity of the Priestly Source: A Reply to Joseph

One of the most recent treatments of the issue is M. Weinfeld's *The Place of the Law in the Religion of Ancient Israel*.⁴⁰ In the third chapter, entitled "Social and Cultic Institutions in the Priestly Source against Their Ancient Near Eastern Background," Weinfeld challenges Wellhausen's assumption that strictly regulated worship implies a late date for P. He cites several examples of festival prescriptions and cultic inventory from Hittite and Ugaritic texts which demonstrate that highly organized worship and structured ritual procedures existed in the Late Bronze Age Levant.⁴¹ He then evaluates several categories, including the place of worship, sacrifice, purification rites, sacred feasts, and the priesthood in light of their larger ancient Near Eastern context, and concludes that data Wellhausen ignored as well as evidence that has come to light since his death, such as the Ugaritic and Hittite parallels for the tent of meeting, animal sacrifices, and purification rites, provides a solid basis for reconsidering a preexilic date for P.⁴²

Weinfeld has successfully demonstrated that we can no longer assign an exilic or postexilic date to P based on its highly developed ritual system. However, these parallels do not establish a preexilic date for P. They demonstrate that such practices existed in the Levant long before the 6th century B.C.E., and therefore could have been included in preexilic Israelite worship, but they do not demonstrate that the Priestly stratum reached its final form prior to the exile.

In addition to the criteria mentioned above, we must consider two additional points. First, if *šelem* in Gen 1:26–27 was used to redefine the divine-human relationship, when in Israel's history would this analogy have had its greatest effect theologically? Rather than assuming that P used *šelem* to describe humanity because Israel was no longer engaged in the worship of divine images, and it was, therefore, no longer a derogatory term, the author may have chosen his terms *precisely because the manufacture and worship of divine images in Israel was widespread*. The application of these terms to humans in relationship to the deity would have surely captured the at-

Blenkinsopp, "ZAW 111 (1999), 10–22; J. Milgrom, "Priestly Terminology and the Political and Social Structure of Pre-Monarchic Israel," *JQR* 69 (1978): 65–81; J. Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16* (AB 3; New York: Doubleday, 1991), esp. pp. 3–35; and idem, "Priestly Source," *ABD* 5:454–61. Rendsburg, "Late Biblical Hebrew," 65–80. See also V. Hurowitz, "Understanding the Priestly Source," *BR* 12/3 (1996): 30–37, 44–47, esp. p. 45–46; E. A. Speiser, "Leviticus and the Critics," in *Yehezkel Kaufmann Jubilee Volume: Studies in Bible and Jewish Religion Dedicated to Yehezkel Kaufmann on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday* (ed. M. Haran; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1960), 29–4; E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1964), xxiv–xxvi; and M. Greenberg, "Idealism and Practicality in Numbers 35:4–5 and Ezekiel 48," *JAOS* 88 (1968) 59–66.

40. M. Weinfeld, *The Place of the Law of the Religion of Ancient Israel* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

41. Weinfeld demonstrates similarity not only in context but also in form between Hittite-Hurrian and Israelite ritual legislation and posits a historical relationship between Hittite ritual law and that found in P. See *ibid.*, 40.

42. *Ibid.*, 40–41, 43–51, 63.

tention of his audience. If so, then Gen 1:1–2:3 would most certainly be relevant to preexilic Israelites, when the production and worship of *šalamîm* was widely practiced, as is well attested in the Iron Age archaeological records of Israel and Judah.⁴³ This observation is not, of course, evidence for a preexilic date for Gen 1:1–2:3, and I have noted above the dangers in dating a text by its content. However, it does suggest that the application of *šelem* to human beings could have been not only an appropriate choice in the Preexilic Period, but an ingenious one: *šelem* in Gen 1:26–27 may have been a double entendre, referring both to a statue and a son.⁴⁴

Second, we must consider when, in ancient Israel's history, the metaphor of kinship would have been a fitting analogy for the divine-human relationship. If the analogy had been applied to Elohim and *Israel*, one might argue it was a product of the premonarchic tribal league, which was structured according to kin relations with Yahweh as the divine *paterfamilias*. Alternatively, it could have been written during the monarchy or divided monarchy, in which case the filial language would have reflected the older kinship traditions established by the premonarchic tribal federation. The exilic and postexilic eras could also be potential contexts for the composition of Gen 1:26–27, that is, if it had been *Israel*, rather than humankind generally, who had been created in the image and likeness of Elohim. The story would have been a powerful and comforting message of hope that sought to reestablish the kinship relationship Israel once enjoyed with her divine kinsman, Yahweh.⁴⁵ The problem, however, is that the "royal son" of God in Gen 1:26–27 is *'ādām*, not *Israel*. That is, Gen 1: 26–27 is an account of *human* origins. It is hard to accept, thus, that Gen 1:1–2:3, and especially Gen 1:26–27, would have been written in the 6th century B.C.E. Would an exiled Israelite have composed an account in which all of humanity, including Israel's captors, the Babylonians, was created in the image and likeness of their God? Could we expect the exiled Israelites to accept such a story?

Although the majority of biblical scholars still accept Graf and Wellhausen's assignment of P, and hence Gen 1:1–2:3 to the 6th/5th century B.C.E., a sufficient number of scholars have marshaled persuasive evidence that

43. See Z. Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallactic Approaches* (London: Continuum), 2001; W. G. Dever, "A Temple Built for Two: Did Yahweh Share a Throne with His Consort Asherah?" *BAR* 34/2 (2008), 54–62, 85; W. G. Dever, "Asherah, Consort of Yahweh: New Evidence from Kuntilet 'Ajrūd," *BASOR* 255 (1984) 21–37; W. G. Dever, "Recent Archaeological Confirmation of the Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel," *Hebrew Studies* 23 (1982), 37–43; Judith Hadley, *The Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah: Evidence for a Hebrew Goddess* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), P. Beck, "The Drawings from Horvat Teiman (Kuntilet 'Ajrūd)," *Tel Aviv* 9 (1982) 3–68; and T. Binger, *Asherah: Goddesses in Ugarit, Israel and the Old Testament* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997).

44. See §4.5, above.

45. Cross, *Kinship and Covenant*, 6–7.

raises serious questions as to whether or not the exilic and/or postexilic periods were the most likely setting for the composition of the so-called priestly material. Although a preexilic date for P remains unproven, a late date for P is much more problematic than once thought. In light of the use of *šelem* and *dāmût*, however, which subtly compare humankind to a statue yet also (re)define the divine-human relationship in kinship terms, I propose that we at least reconsider a preexilic date for Gen 1:1–2:3. As demonstrated above, it is plausible that these analogies could have been formulated prior to the 6th century. In short, we lack sufficient evidence to be dogmatic about the date for Gen 1:1–2:3.

5.4. Source-Critical History and Unity of Genesis 2:5–3:24

That Gen 2:5–3:24 in its final form is the work of the Yahwist (J) is generally well accepted among critical scholars.⁴⁶ What is less clear, however, is the history of its composition. That Genesis 1–11 is a compilation of diverse stories from multiple sources is well established, but is this true of Gen 2:5–3:24?

Budde followed by Gunkel claimed there were two primary J strands in Gen 2:4–3:24.⁴⁷ Their division of J was based on repetition;⁴⁸ the use of the compound name, Yahweh Elohim, for the deity; apparent contradictions; and syntactical evidence of redaction within Gen 2:4b–3:24. According to Budde, J¹, which included Gen 2:4b–9, 16–25; 3:1–19, 23, was reworked and combined with an edition of the story dating to the Assyrian period, namely J², to produce the current text in Gen 2:4b–3:24.⁴⁹ Gunkel, however, argued that there was a primary J strand, J^e (Gen 2:4b–7, 9, 15–25; 3:1–18, 19aβ, 23, and 24ba) that itself was made up of two sources, a story of paradise and expulsion and a creation account.⁵⁰ To J^e, the redactor added fragments of an earlier, more mythological and non-Israelite source, Jⁱ (Gen 2:8; 3:19aa, b, 21, 22, 24a, bβ and bg).⁵¹

46. For a representative analysis of Gen 2:4–3:24 as the work of J, see M. Noth, *A History of Pentateuchal Traditions* (trans. Bernard Anderson; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1981), 20–41, 228–47; and Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?* 50–69.

47. K. Budde, *Die biblische Urgeschichte (Gen. 1–12,5)* (Giessen: Ricker, 1883), 46–47. Gunkel, *Genesis*, 25–28. Gen 2:10–14 is considered by Gunkel and most critical scholars to originate in a separate, ancient source. He also assigns the naming of Eve in 3:20 to a separate source (*Genesis*, 26).

48. For example, the mention of two trees in the middle of the garden (2:9), the double placement of man in the garden (2:8, 15), the two statements about man's expulsion (3:22, 24), and the double mention of clothing (3:7, 22).

49. Budde, *Die biblische Urgeschichte*, 244–45.

50. Gunkel, *Genesis*, 27. According to Gunkel, Job 15:7–8 and Ezek 28:1–19 are Israelite variants of the Paradise narrative in J^e. Similarly Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Continental Commentary*, 192.

51. Gunkel, *Genesis*, 25–27, 37–39. He also posited a separate source for Gen 2:10–14 that predated J^e (p. 27). See also idem, *Creation and Chaos*, 96 and 325 n. 90, where he suggests that the Garden of Eden story probably has Babylonian origins.

Mowinckel, A. Lefèvre, J. Begrich, and many others also divided Gen 2–3 into two sources.⁵² Mowinckel referred to them as the “B” or Sethite source (Gen 2:4b–5a, 7, 7a, 7b(?), 8a, (9), 10–14) and an “A” or Kainite source (all that remained), both of which, he claimed, originally had a creation and a paradise narrative, while Lefèvre identified the two sources as the “Eve” source, Gen 2:4b–7, (8), 9a, 16, (17), 18–25; 3:1–4, (5), 6–21 and a more fragmentary “Garden of Eden” source, Gen 2:(8), 9b, 10–15, (17); 3:(5), 22–24.⁵³ J. Begrich detected one primary narrative in Gen 2–3: 2:4b, 5–8, 16–17, 18–25; 3:1–17, 19ab, 21, 23–24, a “peasant story” that itself was made up of a creation account and a composite, non-Israelite paradise narrative, to which additional fragments from a “nomad story” were added.⁵⁴

H. Schmidt claimed there were not two but three main narrative sources behind Gen 2:4b–3:24: (1) 2:4b–5, 7, 18–24; (2) 2:8b, 9, 16–17, 25; 3:1–18a, 19a, b, 24a, b; and (3) 2:6, 8a, 9b, 15, 18b, 19c, 20, 21, 23–24.⁵⁵ He was followed by D. Carr, who identified the three primary sources in Genesis 2–3 as an early creation account (Gen 2:4b–5, 7–8, 15bβ, 18–24) which was supplemented with a creation and fall narrative (Gen 2:6, 9–15aba, 16–17, 25, and most of chap. 3) to which the “tree of life” texts (Gen 2:9b, 3:22, 24, and possibly 3:20) were added.⁵⁶

R. Pfeiffer argued that Gen 2:4–3:24 belonged not to J but to another source altogether. He claimed that Genesis 2–3, along with Genesis 4–11

52. S. Mowinckel, *The Two Sources of the Predeuteronomiac Primeval History (JE) in Gen 1–11* (Oslo: Dybwad, 1937). A. Lefèvre, “Genèse II, 4b–III, 24 es il composite?” *RSR* 66 (1949) 465–80. J. Begrich, “Die Paradieserzählung. Eine literargeschichtliche Studie,” *ZAW* 50 (1932) 93–116. C. A. Simpson in *Early Traditions of Israel* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1948), 94–95. C. Dohmen, *Schöpfung und Tod: Die Entfaltung theologischer und anthropologischer Konzeptionen in Gen 2/3* (2nd ed.; SBB 35; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1996), 154–74, 208–14; J. McKenzie, “The Literary Characteristics of Gen 2–3,” *TS* 15 (1954) 541–72, esp. p. 554; I. Lewy, “The Two Strata in the Eden Story,” *HUCA* 27 (1956), 93–99. According to Westermann, Gen 2–3 was composed of a creation story (2:4b–8, [10–14], 15b, 18–23, 24) that itself was composed of two traditions (an earlier account of the creation of man from dust and a later creation of male and female), and a paradise narrative (2:9, 15, 16–17, 25; 3:1–24). These were combined to fit a crime-punishment scheme that Westermann claimed was the framework for the entire primeval history. See Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Continental Commentary*, 190–96.

53. Lefèvre, “Genèse II, 4b–III, 24,” 465–80.

54. J. Begrich, “Die Paradieserzählung. Eine literargeschichtliche Studie,” *ZAW* 50 (1932), 93–116. O. Eissfeldt argued for the presence of a “Lay” (L) source (*The Old Testament: An Introduction* [New York: Harper & Row, 1965], 191–94); J. Morgenstern identified a “Kenite” (K) source (“*The Oldest Document of the Hexateuch*,” *HUCA* 4 [1927], 1–138), and G. Fohrer isolated a “Nomadic” (N) source (*Introduction to the Old Testament* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1968], 159–65).

55. H. Schmidt, *Die Erzählung von Paradies und Sündenfall* (Tübingen: Mohr Seibeck, 1931).

56. D. Carr, “The Politics of Textual Subversion: A Diachronic Perspective on the Garden of Eden Story,” *JBL* 112 (1993) 577–95, esp. pp. 581–83. Carr does not specify which verses in Gen 3 belong to the “creation and fall narrative.”

(minus P) and portions of Genesis 14–35, 36, and 38⁵⁷, belong to a separate document he labeled “S.” It originated in the south, he claimed, specifically Edom or Seir, as suggested by its congenial stance toward Cain, the Kenites, and Edom.⁵⁸ This S document was made up of two blocks of material: a 10th-century strand labeled S¹ (Gen 2:5–9, 15–25, and chap. 3) and a post-exilic addition, S² (Gen 2:10–14; 4:1–16; 4:25–26; 5:29; 6:5–8; 7:1–5, 7–10, 12, 16b, 17b, 22–23; 8:2b–3a, 6–12, 13b, 20–22; 10:1b, 8–19, 21, 24–30; 11:28–30; 14:18–20; 25:1–4).⁵⁹ Although the attribution of Genesis 2–3 to a source other than J has not been widely accepted, recently, T. Mettinger has proposed that Genesis 2–3 was the work of the “Eden poet”⁶⁰ who combined a preliminary Adamic myth with selected aspects of Deuteronomistic theology.⁶¹

This summation of selected highlights in the source-critical history of Gen 2:5–3:24, although brief, sufficiently demonstrates the trouble scholars have had in determining the number and types (written and/or oral) of sources behind Gen 2:5–3:24, as well as the origin (Israelite or non-Israelite) and delineation of these sources. Clearly, the author was familiar with the widespread notion that humans were created from dirt or clay. He may have been aware of the idea, attested in Egypt, that a deity could create a king from clay and animate him by breathing into his nostrils.⁶² Whether or not he was directly familiar with the Babylonian *Enūma Eliš*, he began his creation account similarly with a series of negations in Gen 2:5, suggesting, if he was not purposefully alluding to the Babylonian creation story or a related source, that this may have been a standard way to begin a creation account.⁶³ Further, he knew that sacred spaces were typically adorned with gold and precious stones and that sacred gardens, in which life-giving trees grew, were home to the gods and thus often the site of cultic activity. He also demonstrates an awareness of Mesopotamian royal ideology, or at least the concepts found therein, specifically the idea of the king as gardener and

57. For a list of specific verses, see R. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York: Harper, 1948), 160.

58. R. Pfeiffer, “A Non-Israelite Source of the Book of Genesis,” *ZAW* 7 (1930) 66–73; and Pfeiffer, *Introduction*, 159, 162, 166–67.

59. *Ibid.*, 160–61.

60. T. Mettinger, *The Eden Narrative: A Literary and Religio-historical Study of Genesis 2–3* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007).

61. *Ibid.*, 85–98, 124–26. He acknowledges the use of other traditions, including the battle with chaos and the creation of man from dust, but sees an Adamic myth and Deuteronomistic theology as the two major components of Gen 2–3.

62. Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Continental Commentary*, 203–4; N. Sarna, *Genesis* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989) 17; G. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (ed. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker; WBC 1; Waco, TX: Word, 1987), 60; Hoffmeier, *Some Thoughts*, 47; J. Forrester-Brown, *The Two Creation Stories in Genesis: A Study of Their Symbolism* (Berkeley, CA: Shambhala, 1974), 119–20.

63. See Gunkel, *Genesis*, 5; T. Stordalen, “Genesis 2, 4: Restudying a Locus Classicus” *ZAW* 104 (1992) 163–77, esp. p. 168.

chief priest, and he shows his familiarity with Near Eastern law, specifically the loss of kingship through disobedience. I have also demonstrated that he was familiar with the rituals by which a divine statue was created, animated, adorned, fed, and installed, such as those preserved in the *mš pî* and *wpt-r* texts.

There is no solid evidence within the text itself, however, to suggest that the Eden story is the union of two (or more) preexisting creation accounts. In fact, the tight and balanced literary structure argues against it,⁶⁴ indicating instead that although the Eden story incorporates well-known and widespread Near Eastern themes and motifs, the particular combination of ideas was itself something novel. In light of the fact that we simply do not have any explicit evidence as to what sources the author used, it is difficult to postulate much further about the source-critical history of Gen 2:5–3:24.

5.5. Date and Authorship of Genesis 2:5–3:24

5.5.1. Late Date

In addition to the questions about the sources behind Gen 2:5–3:24, the previous consensus on the date of J as the earliest of the pentateuchal sources has increasingly come under attack. Since the 1970s, a growing number of scholars have claimed that J is an exilic or postexilic composition.⁶⁵ In his presidential address to the annual meeting of the Society

64. The unity of Gen 2:5–3:24 is further suggested by the detailed structural analysis of J. Walsh, "Genesis 2:4b–3:24: A Synchronic Approach," *JBL* (1977) 161–77, which claims that Gen 2–3 is made up of seven scenes arranged in a concentric pattern. Each pair of scenes, 1–7, 2–6, and 3–5, corresponds in theme, motif, structure, and/or vocabulary, while scene 4 (Gen 3:6–8), in which man rebels and eats the forbidden fruit, stands alone at the center as the turning point of the story. Although his analysis differs significantly from my own, he, too, demonstrates that the Eden story "has in fact structures and intricate patterns of organization that involve even minor details of the text. Moreover, the patterns so interlock that the deletion of any part of the text (except, perhaps, 2:10b–14) would have significant repercussions for the whole passage" (*ibid.*, 171–72). See also the analysis by Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Continental Commentary*, 190–91; T. Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2–3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature* (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 198–201, 205, 214–49; and Mettinger, *The Eden Narrative*, 85–98, 124–25. Mettinger concludes, "The Eden narrative stands out as a well-structured, unified whole, in which all the different elements make excellent sense as part of the literary strategy of a conscious literary artist," and, therefore, it "should not be made the object of textual surgery" (*The Eden Narrative*, 41). G. Coats reached similar conclusions: "The structure of the unit does not support arguments that the paradise-gained story is independent of the paradise-lost story. Rather, the two elements stand together as one unit, the one a reflex to the other. This point is clear not only from recurring motifs at key points, such as the tree of life or the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but also by the dialectic expressed in the parallel, paradise gained-paradise lost" (*Genesis with an Introduction to Narrative Literature* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983] 51).

65. F. Winnett, "Re-examining the Foundations," *JBL* 84 (1965): 1–19; F. Winnett, "The Arabian Genealogies in the Book of Genesis," in *Translating and Understanding the Old*

of Biblical Literature in 1964, F. Winnett proposed that Genesis 1–11 (and 37–50) was the unified work of “Late J,” a postexilic author, distinct from the J who authored the early portions of the patriarchal narratives (Genesis 12–36), who used diverse oral and perhaps written sources to compose the primeval history.⁶⁶ Winnett cited references to “Ur of the Chaldeans” (Gen 11:28, 31) and the Japhethite people (Gen 10:2–5) as indicators of a late date.⁶⁷ However, the strongest evidence, he argued, was the monotheistic viewpoint expressed in Genesis 1–11 and the author’s understanding of sin as a universal human problem, ideas that, Winnett claimed, would only have arisen in the Exilic or Postexilic Periods.⁶⁸

Testament: Essays in Honor of Herbert Gordon May (ed. H. T. Frank and W. L. Reed; Nashville: Abingdon, 1970), 171–96; C. J. de Catanzaro, *A Literary Analysis of Gen 1–11* (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1957); N. E. Wagner, *A Literary Analysis of Gen 12–36* (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1965); idem, “Abraham and David?” in *Studies on the Ancient Palestinian World* (ed. J. W. Wevers and D. B. Redford (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1972), 117–40; J. Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975); idem, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983); idem, “The Yahwist as Historian,” *SBL Seminar Papers* 24 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 37–55; idem, *Prologue to History* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1992); idem, *The Life of Moses* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1994); R. N. Whybray, *The Making of the Pentateuch: A Methodological Study* (JSOTSup 53; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987); H. Vorländer, *Die Entstehungszeit des jehowistischen Geschichtswerkes* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1978), esp. pp. 368–69, 372; and H. H. Schmidt, *Der sogenannte Jahwist: Beobachtungen und Fragen zur Pentateuchforschung* (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1976). However, Morgenstern suggested a postexilic date for the J material in Gen 1–11 already in 1939. See J. Morgenstern, “The Mythological Background of Psalm 82,” *HUCA* 14 (1939) 93–94. Morgenstern was followed in the 1960s by G. Mendenhall, “The Shady Side of Wisdom: The Date and Purpose of Gen 3,” in *A Light Unto My Path: Studies in Honor of Jacob M. Myers* (ed. H. N. Bream, R. D. Heim, and C. A. Moore; Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1974), 319–34; T. Thompson, *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1974); and J. Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch: An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 19–26. Those who date J to the late Persian or Hellenistic period will not be discussed here. See P. R. Davies, *In Search of “Ancient Israel”* (JSOTSup 148; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992); N. P. Lemche, “The Old Testament: A Hellenistic Book?” *SJOT* 7 (1994): 163–93; F. H. Cryer, “The Hebrew 3rd Masc. Sg. Suffix-JW on Dual and Plural Nouns,” *SJOT* 6 (1992): 205–12; F. H. Cryer, “The Problem of Dating Biblical Hebrew and the Hebrew of Daniel,” in *In the Last Days: On Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic and Its Period* (ed. K. Jeppsen, K. Nielsen, and B. Rosendal (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1994) 185–98; and T. L. Thompson, *Early History of the Israelite People from the Written and Archaeological Sources* (Leiden: Brill, 1992). See the response of A. Hurvitz in “Continuity and Innovation in Biblical Hebrew: The Case of ‘Semantic Change’ in Post-Exilic Writings,” in *Studies in Ancient Hebrew Semantics* (ed. T. Muraoka; Abr-Nahrain Supplement 4; Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 10 and nn. 26–29. See also Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden*, 21–35, 206–13.

66. F. Winnett, “Re-examining the Foundations,” *JBL* 84 (1965) 1–19, esp. p. 18.

67. *Ibid.*, 4.

68. Winnett states, “While it is always possible that a writer is far ahead of his time, the testimony of other Hebrew literature to the development of Hebrew religious thought suggests very definitely that either the exilic or the postexilic period provides the most natural milieu for the author of the primeval history” (*ibid.*). He also says, “It is difficult to

Winnett was followed by his student, J. Van Seters, who has argued in several publications for a late date for J. In his *Prologue to History: The Yahwist as Historian in Genesis*, Van Seters claims that J was produced during the exile as an introduction to the Deuteronomistic History.⁶⁹ It was written under the powerful influence of Babylonia, reflected especially in the primeval history, and is colored by Israel's intense theological crisis of the early and mid-6th century. He concludes, "The challenge of the large world of the diaspora is evident throughout the work. It called for a transformation from a national religion of the land of Israel to a world religion in which the chosen people and the Promised Land continued to have a destiny beyond the crisis of the state's demise."⁷⁰

Despite the influence Winnett's and Van Seters's arguments have had,⁷¹ I do not find them especially convincing. First, Winnett has not demonstrated his claim that monotheism could have emerged among the Israelites *only* in the context of exile. Certainly, the destruction of Judah and the subsequent exile in polytheistic Babylon was an environment in which monotheism would have been embraced by at least some of the exiled Judeans, but should we conclude from this that there were *no* monotheists in Israel prior to the 6th century B.C.E., despite the widespread syncretism and polytheism in preexilic Israel? Although it is difficult to demonstrate the existence of monotheism prior to exile, does the absence of evidence allow us to conclude with certainty that there were no monotheists in preexilic Israel?

Furthermore, although the crisis of exile was certainly a time of intense theological reflection among the former Judeans, it is hard to believe that preexilic Israel thought of sin as only a *national* problem. In fact, Isa 10:12–34 suggests that at least Isaiah, if not his audience, believed that Yahweh would destroy the king of Assyria *because of his arrogant boasting and haughty pride* ('epqōd 'al pāri gōdel lābab melek 'aššur wə'al tip'eret rūm 'ēnāw, 10:12). One could claim that this is an exilic or postexilic text, written as a reflection on Assyria's demise, but it does not make much sense for a prophet to proclaim this message *after* Nineveh's fall in 612 B.C.E. The message would only have had its intended comforting effect if it had been delivered at a time when Israel was under serious threat from Assyria, that is, the 8th century B.C.E.

believe that Hebrew society produced an author with such an outlook as early as the tenth or ninth century B.C. His profound theology and his subtle adaptation of old myths and legends to serve as vehicles for this theology point to a late date" (ibid., 5).

69. J. Van Seters, *Prologue to History*, 332.

70. Ibid.

71. Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*; C. Levin, "The Yahwist: The Earliest Editor in the Pentateuch," *JBL* 126 (2007) 209–30; idem, *The Old Testament: A Brief Introduction* (trans. Margaret Kohl; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 61–70; Mettinger, *The Eden Narrative*, 2007.

Furthermore, although there is little doubt that Genesis 1–11 was heavily influenced by the literature of Mesopotamia, this does not therefore require that the primeval history was written *in* Babylon or during the exile. The great creation and flood stories of ancient Mesopotamia were known in antiquity far beyond the borders of Babylon, and certainly well before the 6th century B.C.E.⁷² Thus, it is certainly possible that the preexilic biblical authors were familiar with them.

Finally, the argument that Genesis 1–11 and 37–50 (Winnett), or J as a whole (Van Seters), *must* be exilic because it reflects the intense theological crisis of the exile is also misleading. Undoubtedly, the Babylonian exile was the most serious crisis ancient Israel faced, and Gen 1–11, 37–50 and J

72. It is well known that, during the second half of the 2nd millennium B.C.E., Akkadian scribal schools existed throughout the ancient Near East, spreading the language, literature, and culture of Mesopotamia westward. Fragments of the *Atrahasis Epic* (see “The Flood Story from Ras Shamra,” in W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard, *Atrahasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999] 131–33) and a complete Gilgamesh tablet (no later than the 12th century B.C.E.) were found at Ras Shamra (see A. George, *Babylonian Topographical Texts* [Leuven: Peeters and Departement Orientalistik, 1999] 139–40), as were other Sumerian and Akkadian literary texts (J. Nougayrol, *Ugaritica V: Nouveaux textes accadiens, hourrites et ugaritiques des archives et bibliothèques privées d’Ugarit* [Mission de Ras Shamra 16; Paris: Imprimerie Nationale and Geuthner, 1968] 300–310). Three pieces of the Gilgamesh Epic dating to circa 13th century B.C.E. were discovered at the Hittite capital of Hattusa (Boghazköi) in central Anatolia (see George, *Babylonian*, 132–35); one fragment (13th–early 12th century B.C.E.) was found at Emar (Tell Meskene in Syria), and another fragment (from Tablet VII, circa 14th century B.C.E.) was found at Megiddo in Palestine (see *ibid.*, 138–39). Additional versions and fragments of the epic from the Middle Babylonian period are attested in Hittite and in Hurrian. See Tigay, *The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), 110–18, 119. Multiple fragments of *Enūma Eliš* (Tablets I, II, IV, V, VI, VII) were recovered from Huzirina (Sultantepe, Turkey). See P. Talon, *The Standard Babylonian Creation Myth Enūma Eliš: Introduction, Cuneiform Text, Transliteration, and Sign List with a Translation and Glossary in French* (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corups Project), 2005, xiii–xviii. Additional Babylonian literary texts were uncovered at Amarna, Egypt. See J. A. Knudtzon, *Die El-Amarna-Tafeln* (2 vols.; VAB 16; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1915), nos. 356–58; and A. F. Rainey, *El Amarna Tablets 359–379* (AOAT 8; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker / Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1970), no. 359, including a 15th–14th-century B.C.E. copy of the Babylonian Adapa myth (see Shlomo Izre’el, *Adapa and the South Wind: Language Has the Power of Life and Death* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2001], 5–8, 47–71). See also W. Horowitz, T. Oshima, and S. Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan: Cuneiform Sources from the Land of Israel in Ancient Times* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2006). Tigay comments, “In considering the possible influence of Mesopotamian literature on the Bible, it is important to note that many cuneiform literary texts were known west of Mesopotamia in the MB (Middle Babylonian) Period, prior to the Israelite settlement in Palestine” (*The Evolution*, 1982, 119–20 n. 35). W. G. Lambert asserts, “The present writer’s opinion is that only the Amarna period has any real claim to be the period when this material (the Babylonian myths and legends) moved westwards. This is the period when the Babylonian language and cuneiform script were the normal means of international communication between countries from Egypt to the Persian Gulf” (“A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis,” *JTS* 16 (1965) 287–300, quotation from p. 299). There is also the historical context of an intense Assyrian presence in the Levant from at least the 8th century B.C.E. to consider when discussing the influence of Mesopotamian literature on Gen 1–11.

are replete with the themes of alienation, oppression, and theological upheaval. However, the exile was not the only period in which these themes were relevant. If there is any historical validity to the tradition that Israel's ancestors were slaves in Egypt,⁷³ is it then possible that at least parts of Genesis 1–11, 37–50, or sections of "J" could have roots in the premonarchic period? I am not arguing here for a premonarchic or even a preexilic date for Genesis 1–11, 37–50 or J. The point I am trying to make is this: because the themes of oppression, theological crisis, and alienation in a foreign land were relevant to more than one period in Israel's history, they should not be used to insist on an exilic or postexilic date for Genesis 1–11, 37–50 or J.

Three of the most recent arguments for a late dating of J have been published by E. Otto, C. Levin, and T. Mettinger.⁷⁴ Otto argues that the Eden story can be no earlier than the 6th century because of its sapiential and Deuteronomistic features.⁷⁵ The sapiential features include the use of puns and the theme of man's seduction by woman, both of which have thematic parallels with the book of Proverbs, and the theme of man's knowledge of good and evil, which Otto compares to the treatment of this same theme in Sir 17:6–7, Eccl 8:6, and Job 15:7–8.⁷⁶ Otto lists the themes of covenant, divinely sanctioned rest (*nwh*), and the negative impact of an ungodly spouse as the Deuteronomistic features present in Gen 2:4b–3:24.⁷⁷

While the Eden story certainly shares certain features with the Wisdom and Deuteronomistic traditions, Otto provides no persuasive evidence that it should therefore be assigned to the 6th century or later. The use of puns is not limited to the book of Proverbs or to the Wisdom tradition. In fact, it is attested in Isa 10:8, where the author plays on the Akkadian *šarru*, "king," with Hebrew *sār*, "prince," and in Isa 23:16, which contains a pun on the term *zkr*, the root of which means both "to remember" (*zkr* 1) and "to fornicate" (*zkr* 2).⁷⁸ Puns are also found in Biblical Hebrew poetry (Song

73. For a list of biblical sources on the origins of Israel, including but not limited to those texts which link Israelite origins with Egypt, see P. Machinist, "Outsiders or Insiders: The Biblical View of Emergent Israel and Its contexts," in *The Other in Jewish Thought and History* (ed. Laurence J. Silverstein and Robert L. Cohn; New York: New York University Press, 1994) 35–60, esp. pp. 37–41. Machinist does not, however, deal with the issue of historicity.

74. Otto, *Das Ägyptische Mundöffnungsritual*; C. Levin, "The Yahwist," 209–30; idem, *The Old Testament*, 61–70; Mettinger, *The Eden Narrative*, 2007.

75. E. Otto, "Die Paradieserzählung Genesis 2–3: Eine Nachpriesterschriftliche Lehrerzählung in Ihrem Religionshistorischen Kontext," in *"Jedes Ding Hat Seine Zeit": Studien Zur Israelitischen Und Altorientalischen Weisheit: Diethelm Michel Zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. Anja Angela Diesel, Reinhard G. Lehmann, Eckart Otto, and Andreas Wagner; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1996) 167–92, esp. p. 174.

76. Ibid., 175–79.

77. Ibid., 179–83.

78. G. Rendsburg, "Word Play in Biblical Hebrew: An Eclectic Collection," in *Puns and Pundits: Word Play in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Literature* (ed. Scott B. Noegel; Bethesda, MD: CDL, 2000) 137–62.

4:4; Ps 137:5), and narrative (Gen 15:1; Num 16:30; 1 Sam 2:36; Jon 3:7; and Exod 16:15), and they are well attested in the literature of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Ugarit.⁷⁹ Further, the theme of man's seduction by woman appears in Genesis 39, a nonsapiential narrative, and the claim that "the knowledge of good and evil" belongs exclusively to the wisdom tradition is belied by Deut 1:39; 2 Sam 14:17; and 1 Kings 3:9, none of which are wisdom texts. Furthermore, concerning the Eden story's relationship to Deuteronomistic theology and vocabulary, Otto seems unaware of the fact that *nwh* in Gen 2:15 appears not in the first Hiphil (Hiphil A) but in the *second* Hiphil (Hiphil B), where it means not "to rest" but "to place, set, lay" and, in certain contexts, "to install."⁸⁰ Finally, his suggestion that Deut 7:2–4 informs the relationship of Adam and Eve is misguided. This prohibition regards intermarriage with *foreigners* and is therefore irrelevant to the relationship between Adam and Eve, both of whom are, according to Genesis 1, co-images of God, and in Genesis 2, "one bone and flesh."

C. Levin takes a different approach. Through a close examination of six different blocks of pentateuchal narrative⁸¹ followed by a discussion of the evidence for the unity of the J strand, including the choice of sources J used, the view of history, and the theme of blessing, Levin assigns the Yahwist to the 6th century. For example, in the first block, the primeval history (Genesis 1–11), Levin notes that the Table of Nations in Genesis 10 mentions Assyria but not Babylon and Persia, and thus he concludes that the text was composed in the 7th century and served as one of J's sources.⁸² He also cites examples of literary dependence, arguing that Genesis 28, the founding of the sanctuary at Bethel, was influenced by a Mesopotamian tradition about the founding of Etemenanki⁸³ and that the story of Moses' exposure as an infant in Exodus 2 was influenced by the birth legend of Sargon of Akkad.⁸⁴ Levin concludes that the Yahwist was a member of the

79. Ibid., 138–43. *Egypt*: See A. Loprieno, "Puns and Word Play in Ancient Egyptian," in *Puns and Pundits: Word Play in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Literature* (ed. Scott B. Noegel; Bethesda, MD: CDL, 2000), 3–20. *Mesopotamia*: See J. Klein and Y. Sefati, "Word Play in Sumerian Literature," in *Puns and Pundits: Word Play in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Literature* (ed. Scott B. Noegel; Bethesda: CDL, 2000), 23–61; and V. A. Hurowitz, "Alliterative Allusions, Rebus Writing, and Paronomastic Punishment: Some Aspects of Word Play in Akkadian Literature," in *Puns and Pundits: Word Play in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Literature* (ed. Scott B. Noegel; Bethesda, MD: CDL, 2000), 63–87. *Ugarit*: W. G. E. Watson, "Puns Ugaritic Newly Surveyed," in *Puns and Pundits: Word Play in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Literature* (ed. Scott B. Noegel; Bethesda: CDL, 2000), 117–34.

80. *Place, set, lay*: HALOT 2:679. *Install*: See the discussion on Gen 2:15 in §4.7.3, above.

81. Namely, the primeval history in Gen 1–11, the patriarchal history in Gen 12–36, the Joseph stories in Gen 37, 39–45, the Moses stories in Exod 2–4, the exodus and wilderness wanderings, and the Balaam stories in Num 22–24.

82. Levin, "The Yahwist," 213–14. That is, J must be later than the 7th century because it uses Gen 10 as a source.

83. Ibid., 215–16.

84. Ibid., 216.

upper class who produced the Pentateuch during the exile as a means of providing hope for himself and his beleaguered people. He comments:

The conditions of existence as foreigner are described so exactly and immediately that one cannot avoid seeing the author as also being in this situation. A cruel fate has driven him out of the familiar world of Palestine into the foreign land. The conditions that the patriarchs each time experience among an indigenous population and that the Israelites then endure under Egyptian oppression and on their wanderings through the desert reflect his own present. The doubt whether Yahweh is able to guarantee the blessing of support in the foreign country is his doubt. The hope for Yahweh's protection and, in the end, for a return reflect his own hope. What the author describes, therefore, are the conditions in which the Jewish people, scattered throughout the world, already existed.⁸⁵

There are, however, several weaknesses in Levin's argument. First, if Genesis 10 is a post-7th century source for J, then why would J not update his own text and include Babylonia and Persia? Second, there is no evidence that the establishment of the sanctuary at Bethel (Genesis 28) is genetically related to the story of the founding of Etemenanki or that the birth legend of Sargon directly influenced the Moses story in Exodus 2.⁸⁶ Based on the fact that the infant-exposure motif was widely attested in antiquity, the similarity of the latter two stories could well be typological rather than historical.⁸⁷ Third, and more important, although Levin rightly points out that the patriarchal narratives aptly describe the oppressive conditions Israel endured as aliens in a foreign land, he has ignored the deeply rooted and pervasive biblical tradition, which can be found in biblical texts from the premonarchic period through the 4th century B.C.E.,⁸⁸ that Israel considered itself an outsider. Thus, as argued above, the theme of "oppressed outsider" does not therefore require that J was composed during the exile.

Mettinger deals specifically with Genesis 2–3 rather than all of J. He argues for a late postexilic date of the Eden story based on four major factors.⁸⁹ First, he claims that the Eden story presupposes the priestly creation account in Genesis 1, which itself is widely considered a postexilic composition.⁹⁰ Second, he claims that the Eden poet is well acquainted with the

85. Ibid., 228–29.

86. Hallo raises the possibility that Exod 2 may have influenced the birth legend of Sargon. See W. Hallo, "Compare and Contrast: The Contextual Approach to Biblical Literature," in *The Bible in the Light of Cuneiform Literature* (ed. William W. Hallo, Bruce William Jones, and Gerald L. Mattingly; Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1990) 1–30. esp. p. 6.

87. See B. Lewis, *The Sargon Legend: A Study of the Akkadian Text and the Tale of the Hero Who Was Exposed at Birth* (Cambridge, MA: ASOR, 1980), 149–209.

88. See Machinist, "Outsiders or Insiders," 41–42.

89. Mettinger, *The Eden Narrative*, 134.

90. On this point Mettinger refers to Otto, "Die Paradieserzählung Genesis 2–3," 183–92; J. Sawyer, "The Image of God, the Wisdom of Serpents and the Knowledge of Good and Evil," in *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical, and Literary Images of Eden* (ed.

themes of obedience-blessing and disobedience-curses in the Deuteronomistic theology, as demonstrated by the fact that he incorporated these themes into his creation account.⁹¹ He also understands the view of death and eternal life expressed in Genesis 2–3 to be a late theological development.⁹² Finally, a postexilic date for the Eden story would explain why there are no allusions to it in the preexilic biblical texts.

His first criterion for dating the Eden story is based on the *assumption* that Genesis 1 is a late composition. If Genesis 1 is to be used as a legitimate point from which to date other texts, its late date needs to be demonstrated, not assumed. Furthermore, the themes of obedience-blessing and disobedience-curses are not unique to the Deuteronomist. The antiquity of these ideas is well demonstrated in numerous Near Eastern covenant documents from Hatti, Egypt, and Mesopotamia spanning the Late Bronze and Iron Ages.⁹³ Thus, whether the biblical formulation of covenant was preexilic or later, the author of the Eden story would not have been dependent on Deuteronomy for these ideas.

Perhaps Mettinger's strongest argument for a late date for the Eden story is the lack of allusions to it in preexilic biblical texts. However, he has not considered that an exilic or postexilic allusion to Eden may reflect a preexilic Eden account, such as Gen 2:5–3:24.⁹⁴ The re-creation of Israel in Ezekiel 37 illustrates my point:

Paul Morris and Deborah Sawyer; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992) 64–73, esp. pp. 64–66; and Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden*, 206–13.

91. Mettinger, *The Eden Narrative*, 42–64.

92. Mettinger refers to John Day, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000), 116–27; and B. Janowski, "Der Gott Israels und die Toten: Eine Religions- und theologiegeschichtliche Skizz," a lecture given at "Israels Gott und die Gotter der Volker: Symposium zum 80. Geburtstag von Klaus Koch," Hamburg, 17–18 November 2006.

93. See, for example, G. Beckman, "Hittite Treaties and the Development of the Cuneiform Treaty Tradition," in *Die deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerke: Redaktions- und religionsgeschichtliche Perspektiven zur "Deuteronomismus"-Diskussion in Tora und Vorderen Propheten* (ed. Markus Witte, Konrad Schmid, Doris Prechel, and Jan Christian Gertz (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), 279–301; Veytsel Donbaz, "An Old Assyrian Treaty from Kültepe," *JCS* 57 (2005): 63–68; Ogen Goelet, Jr., and Baruch A. Levine, "Making Peace in Heaven and on Earth: Religious and Legal Aspects of the Treaty between Ramesses II and Hattusili III," in *Boundaries of the Ancient Near Eastern World: A Tribute to Cyrus Gordon* (ed. Meir Lubetski, Claire Gottlieb, and Sharon Keller (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 252–99; A. Malamat, "A Note on the Ritual of Treaty Making in Mari and the Bible," *IEJ* 45/4 (1995): 226–29; G. Mendenhall, *Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (Pittsburgh: Biblical Colloquium, 1955); idem, "Covenant Forms in Israelite Tradition," *BA* 17/3 (1954): 50–76; and idem, "The Suzerainty Treaty Structure: Thirty Years Later," in *Religion and Law: Biblical-Judaic and Islamic Perspectives* (ed. Edwin B. Firmage, Bernard G. Weiss, and John W. Welch; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 85–100.

94. Granted, this, too, is an assumption. The point I am trying to make is that we must at least consider this alternative.

1. The Breath of Life

וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה וַיִּפַּח בְּאַפִּיו נְשֵׁמַת חַיִּים

He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and the man became a living being. (Gen 2:7b)

וַחַיִּיתֶם אֲנִי מְבִיא בְכֶם רוּחַ

I will cause breath to enter you, that you may live. (Ezek 37:5b)

וַחַיִּיתֶם וְנָתַתִּי בְכֶם רוּחַ

I will put breath in you, that you may live. (Ezek 37:6b)

יְהוָה כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי
בְּאֵי הָרוּחַ מֵאַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת
וּפָחִי בְּהָרוּגִים הָאֵלֶּה וַיְחַיּוּ

Thus says the Lord, Yahweh:
From the four winds, come, O breath,
and breath on these slain
that they may live. (Ezek 37:9b–10)

וַחַיִּיתֶם וְנָתַתִּי רוּחִי בְכֶם

I will put my breath in you, and you will live. (Ezek 37:14)

2. Installation in the Land

בְּגֶן־עֵדֶן הוּא וַיִּנַּח

Then he installed him in the garden of Eden. (Gen 2:15b)

וַהֲבֵאתִי אֶל־אֲדָמַת יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶתְכֶם

I will bring you to the land of Israel. (Ezek 37:12)

עַל־אֲדָמַתְכֶם אֶתְכֶם וְהִנַּחְתִּי

I will place you on your (own) land. (Ezek 37:14)

Note the parallels between the creation of humankind and the re-creation of corporate Israel in the first set of verses. In Gen 2:7b, man becomes a living being (*nepeš ḥayyāh*) when Yahweh blows (*nph*) the breath of life (*nišmat ḥayyîm*) into his nostrils. Similarly, in Ezekiel 37, the dry bones of corporate Israel come to life (v. 6, *ḥyh*) when Yahweh causes the breath (*rûah*) to enter them (v. 5), when he invokes the breath to breathe (v. 9, *nph*)⁹⁵ on them, and when he himself puts (v. 6, *ntn*) breath in them, causing them to live (v. 6b, 9). In the second set of verses, the return of corporate Israel to her homeland is described with the Hiphil of *nwh* (37:14), the latter of which recalls the use of this same root in Gen 2:15 to describe Adam's placement in the garden.⁹⁶

95. The same verb is in Gen 2:7.

96. Note, however, that in Ezek 37:14 *nwh* is in the Hiphil A, whereas in Gen 2:15 *nwh* is in the Hiphil B.

It is certainly possible, therefore, that Ezekiel knew Gen 2:5–3:24 and was intentionally drawing a comparison between the re-creation of corporate Israel and the creation of Adam. The point I am trying to make, however, is that we should at least consider the possibility that when exilic and postexilic texts mention Eden,⁹⁷ they may be doing so in reference to a preexilic Eden story, such as Gen 2:5–3:24, if indeed it is preexilic.

In sum, the arguments for a late date for the Eden story are inconclusive and seem informed more by assumptions about the evolution of Israelite religious thought, literary dependency, and the dates of certain themes, topics, and literary devices, rather than by actual evidence. Before I draw my own conclusions, I will discuss the arguments for an early date for “J.”

5.5.2. *Early Date*

Despite the growing trend for a late date for J, there are many scholars who defend a preexilic date.⁹⁸ Recently, J. Emerton has proposed a date for J in the 9th–7th centuries B.C.E. based on eight Northwest Semitic monumental inscriptions and the Deir ‘Alla text from Jordan.⁹⁹ Although they are not history books themselves, these texts do testify to the existence of history writing among Israel’s neighbors in the 9th–7th centuries and display affinity with biblical historical texts. Emerton thus concludes that they likely had some connection to early Israelite historiography.¹⁰⁰ The Deir ‘Alla text is especially noteworthy in that it demonstrates the existence of narrative prose on a religious subject in a language akin to Biblical Hebrew from a site in proximity to Israel.¹⁰¹ Emerton concludes, “If at least some scribes in Judah and Israel, as well as elsewhere in the region, were able to compose monumental inscriptions that display literary skill, it is likely that they also exercised their skill in other ways.”¹⁰² These “other ways” to which Emerton refers includes the composition of the J source and a late-7th-century edition of the book of Kings.¹⁰³

97. Aside from Gen 2:5–3:24, Eden is mentioned only in Isa 51:3; Ezek 28:13; 31:9, 16, 19; 36:35; and Joel 2:3.

98. J. A. Emerton, “The Origin of the Promises to the Patriarchs in the Older Sources of the Book of Genesis,” VT 32 (1982): 14–32; J. A. Emerton, “The Date of the Yahwist,” in *In Search of Pre-exilic Israel: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar* (ed. John Day; London: T. & T. Clark, 2004) 107–29; S. McEvenue, “A Return to Sources in Gen 28, 10–22?” ZAW 106 (1994) 375–89; and W. H. Schmidt, “A Theologian of the Solomonic Era? A Plea for the Yahwist,” in *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays* (ed. T. Ishida; Tokyo: Yamakawa-Shuppansha, 1982), 55–73.

99. J. Emerton, “The Kingdoms of Judah and Israel and Ancient Hebrew History Writing,” in *Biblical Hebrew in Its Northwest Semitic Setting: Typological and Historical Perspectives* (ed. S. E. Fassberg and A. Hurvitz; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006) 33–49, esp. pp. 46–48.

100. Ibid., 46.

101. Ibid., 48.

102. Ibid., 49.

103. Ibid.

R. Wright uses linguistic evidence to argue for a preexilic date for J.¹⁰⁴ Wright analyzes 40 linguistic features of Late (exilic or postexilic) Biblical Hebrew (LBH) and finds that none of them appears in J. Specifically, expressions that appear exclusively in late postexilic texts are absent from J, which instead uses the Standard Biblical Hebrew (SBH) equivalent.¹⁰⁵ Eight of the 40 LBH features that appear in early postexilic works are absent from J,¹⁰⁶ and in five cases J uses earlier equivalents of terms that appear in exilic texts. Wright surmises, “The only conclusion which the linguistic evidence permits is a preexilic date for ‘J.’ Indeed, given the total absence of late features in ‘J,’ one should look to a period antedating the late preexilic period.”¹⁰⁷

The value in Emerton’s work is that he has eliminated the argument that the Eden story could not possibly have been composed in the preexilic period. He has, however, only demonstrated *the possibility* of a preexilic date, and he has done so with circumstantial evidence. Wright is also guilty of arguing from silence. His case for a preexilic date for J is based on the *absence* of LBH features in J. Although this demonstrates the likelihood of an early date, it is not conclusive. Further, and this is a serious weakness, Wright does not present any distinctively preexilic linguistic features of J,¹⁰⁸ something one would expect if it was indeed a preexilic composition.

We are left, thus, with no satisfactory answer to the question of when, precisely, the Eden story was composed. However, if Gen 1:1–2:3 was written as an introduction to the book of Genesis, which had already been organized into ten discrete blocks of material each joined to the others by a *tôladôt* notice (§2.3.3), as I will affirm below (see §5.6), then we can at least suggest a relative date: Gen 2:5–3:24 would be the older text.

5.5.3. Authorship

Gen 2:4b–3:24 has traditionally been understood by biblical scholars as the product of the Yahwist. J is characterized by its use of the name “Yahweh” for the divine; its anthropomorphic presentation of God; a fresh, spontaneous and “primitive” literary style; and an overarching concern with human transgression and its consequences, including human suffering.¹⁰⁹ Gen 2:4b–3:24 was assigned to J not only because it refers to the divinity as “Yahweh Elohim” but because it portrays God anthropomorphically as one who molds, breathes, plants, waters, builds, and walks, and

104. R. Wright, *Linguistic Evidence for the Pre-exilic Date of the Yahwistic Source* (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 419; London: T. & T. Clark, 2005).

105. *Ibid.*, 161.

106. *Ibid.*

107. *Ibid.*, 164. Note his comments, “Even if some of the items identified as LBH in this study are later found not to be distinctively late, there is still no late language in J” (p. 164 n. 49).

108. By “distinctive” I mean features that are *only* attested before the exile.

109. For a convenient list of characteristic J features, see Speiser, *Genesis*, xxvi–xxix.

it describes his acts of creation with the verbs *‘ašah* and *yašar* instead of *bara*, as in Gen 1:1–2:3.

There are, however, several problems with the above criteria. First, the division of sources based on the divine name is faulty. Indeed, Gen 1:1–2:3 refers to God as “Elohim,” but in the Eden story he is known not simply as Yahweh but Yahweh *Elohim*. Further, while the deity is presented anthropomorphically in Gen 2:5–3:24, in Genesis 1 he *speaks* both to the heavenly hosts (1:26) and to the man and the woman (1:28–30), and he *creates*, not only with *br’* (1:1, 21, 27) but also with *‘sh* (1:7, 16, 25, 26) as in Genesis 2. H also *sees or perceives* (*rjh* in 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31), he *names* (*qr’+ lā* in 1:5, 8, 10), he *sets* (*ntn*, 1:17), and on the seventh day he finishes the work he has done and *rests* (*šbt* in 2:2, 3). Furthermore, he creates humankind in *his* image and likeness, suggesting, based on Gen 5:1–3, that Gen 1:26–27 defines the divine-human relationship in filial terms.¹¹⁰ Certainly there are differences between the two creation accounts, not only in subject matter and scope, but in the order of events and in the way they are described. However, to assign Gen 2:5–3:24 to J based, in part, on the presentation of the deity as anthropomorphic, is to ignore the obvious anthropomorphisms in Gen 1:1–2:3.¹¹¹ Finally, the view that the Eden story belongs to J because of its “primitive literary style” can hardly be maintained. Based on the above structural analysis¹¹² Gen 2:5–3:24 is clearly a literary masterpiece.

Who, then, is responsible for this extraordinary account of human creation, when did he compose it, and what sources did he use? Clearly, it was an extremely well-educated individual who was versed in Near Eastern creation traditions and royal ideology, who was acquainted with Near Eastern law, and, as I have argued in chap. 4, was familiar with the rituals for the creation, animation, and installation of divine statues. This suggests that it was likely penned (or at least redacted) by an Israelite scribe, a member of the royal court, and/or a priest. Unfortunately, the evidence, or, more accurately, the lack thereof, does not permit us to be any more specific about the authorship of the Eden story.

5.6. Conclusion

As noted in the introduction, A. Schüle rightly claims that the description of man as the image of God in Genesis 1–9 should be understood within the broader context of ancient Near Eastern divine image production.¹¹³ Specifically, he argues that *šelem*, *dāmūt*, and *bāšelem* *’ēlōhīm* were chosen because, in P’s estimation, they conveyed in full what it means to

110. See §4.5, above.

111. On the anthropomorphisms in Gen 1:1–2:3, see also §5.5, above.

112. See also the structural analyses of Walsh, “Genesis 2:4b–3:24”; Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden*, 198–201, 205, 214–49; Mettinger, *The Eden Narrative*, 85–98, 124–25; Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Continental Commentary*, 190–91; and Coats, *Genesis*, 51.

113. Schüle, “Made in the Image of God,” 11.

be human. That is, *šelem* communicates that man is physically and mentally similar to God, that he has dominion and authority in the world, that his presence conveys the presence of Yahweh, and that he, like Yahweh, has the power to create.¹¹⁴ Schüle concludes, “the *imago dei* as the key concept in the anthropology of the priestly code is of all-embracing character. It is not limited to ‘religious’ aspects of human existence . . . but relates to every instance of mental, physical, social and even sexual life.”¹¹⁵

This definition of man, Schüle contends, was not viewed favorably by the Yahwist, who wrote Genesis 2 as a critical response to P. According to Genesis 2, argues Schüle, the *imago dei* concept falters as a comprehensive definition of man because it fails to include certain human aspirations which are vital to human life, including the unique relationship between male and female; the search for knowledge, including the knowledge of good and evil; and human capacity to assert free will against the will of God.¹¹⁶ Thus, in Schüle’s estimation, Genesis 2 redefines, *over and against* Gen 1:26–27, what it means to be human.¹¹⁷

114. Ibid., 4–7.

115. Ibid., 7.

116. Ibid., 11, 14.

117. Schüle (“Made in the Image of God,” 17–18) also claims that the garden of Eden was an inadequate and unsatisfactory place for man because it denied him the knowledge of good and evil, defined by Schüle as “wisdom as a source of human creativity,” and the ability to procreate. It was only outside the confines of the garden that Adam and Eve were able to gain wisdom and to reproduce. Schüle concludes, “The garden is not the kind of environment that finally allows Adam to become what, according to Gen 1, 28, he is supposed to: be fruitful and take dominion” (“Made in the Image of God,” 17). Problematic with this interpretation is Schüle’s definition of “the knowledge of good and evil.” Rather than wisdom as a source for human creativity, “knowing good and evil” seems to refer to the king’s ability to render just and righteous verdicts and decisions in both judicial and more general realms of human activity through the use of his god-given wisdom; see W. M. Clark, “A Legal Background to the Yahwist’s Use of ‘Good and Evil’ in Gen 2–3,” *JBL* 88 (1969) 266–78, p. 269. See also R. W. L. Moberly, “Did the Serpent Get It Right,” *JTS* 39 (1988) 1–27, esp. pp. 21–24. In the context of Gen 2–3, Clark argues that “knowing good and evil” refers to man’s attempt to usurp Yahweh’s role as ultimate arbiter. He states, “Man takes upon himself the responsibility of trying apart from God to determine whether something is good for himself or not. It is not that man has no knowledge before and gains knowledge, or that to know good and evil means to experience evil in addition to good. Rather, man himself declares what is good. He does what is good in his own eyes rather than what is good in the eyes of God” (Clark, “A Legal Background,” 277, my emphasis). Furthermore, Clark asserts, “Adam did not accept the decision from God as sufficient reason to preclude him from making a contrary decision. Man would determine himself what was good and what was not—a divine prerogative. Thus, like Solomon and David, in regard to knowing good and evil Adam became like God (vs. 22), with the difference that he had seized this likeness whereas it was given to Solomon” (p. 278, my emphasis). In other words, the serpent, who did indeed prove to be more crafty than any other animal, assured Adam and Eve that they could, in a sense, become gods themselves, setting their own standards and being the ultimate judge. However, when they ate the fruit, their eyes were opened to the fact that such insurrection would not be tolerated. Their attempt to become like God, or, perhaps even a god or divine being, was punished with banishment, toil, and eventually

I agree with Schüle that the *imago dei* concept should be interpreted in light of the broader context of the creation, animation, and installation of divine statues in the ancient Near East. However, as I have argued, this is not the only context in which *šelem* and *dāmūt* should be understood. These words do not belong exclusively to the lexicon of divine statue manufacture. They are also terms of sonship, and thus their appearance in Gen 1:26–27 should be interpreted first in light of Gen 5:1–3.

Furthermore, one could argue that Gen 2:5–3:24 was written, at least in part, to explain the startling use of *šelem*, *dāmūt*, and *bašelem ʾēlōhīm* in the context of an account of *human* creation. Surely, the application of these terms to humankind in Gen 1:26–27 would have required clarification, especially if the biblical authors were redefining what it meant to be an image of God.¹¹⁸ It is equally possible, however, that Gen 1:1–2:3 is the later text, written as an explicit statement on the subtle allusions to divine statue animation rituals in the Eden story. If the author of Gen 1:1–2:3 was also the final redactor (R) of the book of Genesis, then he joined the two stories with the same formula he had already used to combine the other nine blocks of material: the *tôladôt* notice in Gen 2:4, which functioned, as did all the *tôladôt* in Genesis, as both a conclusion of the preceding narrative and an introduction to the following material, while narrowing the scope of the narrative from the many to the one (see §2.3.3), in this case, from the creation of the world to the creation of humankind. If, however, R is not the author of Gen 1:1–2:3 but only the redactor who assigned the two creation accounts their present order, then we have no way of determining even a relative chronology between the two stories. In the end, what we have is the order imposed on Gen 1:1–2:3 and 2:5–3:24 by R. Whether or not Gen 2:5–3:24 is the older story, it is positioned by the *tôladôt* in Gen 2:4 as the sequel to Elohīm's creation of the world. The result was not merely a compilation of disparate sources but a brilliant exposé on the character of Elohīm/Yahweh Elohīm, the identity of humankind, and the nature of the divine-human relationship.

death. (Compare the offense and punishment of the prince (*nāgīd*) of Tyre in Ezek 28:1–10 and the king (*melek*) of Tyre in Ezek 28:11–19, both of whom were destroyed because of their hubris. They claimed to be gods, but Yahweh Elohīm sharply responded, "You are but a man, and no god, though you make your heart like the heart of a god" (28:2). Thus, the garden was not an inhospitable place for Adam and Eve as they were created, as Schüle argues. It did limit their knowledge, but this knowledge was not wisdom as a source for human creativity. Rather, it was knowledge that would allow man to determine for himself what is good, that is, to act as God, something that could only be granted, as it was to David and Solomon, but not seized. Nor did the garden prevent Adam and Eve from being fruitful and taking dominion. The fact that they were forced to reproduce outside Eden was a direct consequence of their rebellion. The garden was not the problem.

118. Schüle and I are in agreement on this point. He states, "The symbol of the *imago dei* is highly suggestive and as such invites further interpretation. Precisely this is going on . . . in Gen 2,4b–3,24" (Schüle, "In the Image of God, 7).

Chapter 6

Summary, Conclusions, and Implications

6.1. Summary of Findings and Implications for Our Understanding of Genesis 1:26–27 and Genesis 2:5–3:24

This study began with a question which has intrigued Biblical scholars and laymen alike for centuries: how are we to understand Gen 1:26–27 in which humans are described as created in the image and according to the likeness of God? This question, it was argued, had to be pursued through a series of secondary inquiries. Are *ṣelem* and *dāmūt* distinct terms, referring respectively to humans' natural and supernatural likeness to God? Is the correspondence to the divine limited to spiritual qualities or should these terms be understood in a corporeal sense? Further, how does the Eden story depict the divine-human relationship, and what is the relationship between the two biblical accounts of creation? Does Gen 2:5–3:24 preserve a distinct tradition, in opposition to the position of Gen 1:1–2:3, or, as the sequel to Gen 1:1–2:3, does it in some way offer an explanation of the opaque *bāṣelem* *ʾēlōhīm* in Gen 1:27?

To answer all of these questions I began in chapter 2 with the Eden story itself, addressing first the issue of where the story began. Although the arguments in support of Gen 2:4b as the start of the Eden story were compelling, the fact that the *tôlādôt* notices functioned consistently in Genesis and elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible as an introduction to what follows required that we reconsider the role of Gen 2:4a in relation to the Eden story. Through a fresh analysis of the *tôlādôt* formulae in Genesis I discovered that each of the genealogical notices¹ was embedded in a similar literary arrangement, referred to as the “*tôlādôt* step-pattern” (ABA'(C)D). The *tôlādôt* (B) functioned both as a summary of a preceding text (A) and as the introduction to a following related text (A'(C)D). As demonstrated in chapter 2, Gen 2:4a fit the pattern. It functioned not only as the link connecting the two creation accounts, but, like the other *tôlādôt* in Genesis, as the conduit through which the author narrowed the focus of the story from the general (the creation of the universe), to the specific (the creation of humanity).

The literary structure of Gen 2:5–3:24 was then examined and it was seen that each of the three major units was organized around a problem-solution schema. Although both of the problems presented in the first two

1. Gen 5:1a; 6:9; 11:27a, 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; and 37:2.

units were immediately resolved, the story offered no solution to the crisis of Gen 3: the man and his wife had become like *ʾēlōhîm*. This catastrophe was expressed not only by direct statement, but it was reinforced on the literary level by a rapid succession of converted *yiqtol* verbs (Gen 3:6b) and the ingenious use of chiasm, *inclusio*, balance and reversal. It was here in Gen 3 that we saw a significant departure from the *pîṭ pî* and the *wpt-r*, the rituals by which a divine image was enlivened in Mesopotamia and Egypt, respectively. In the comparative rituals the opening of the eyes and the subsequent transformation of the statue into a divine manifestation were the expressed purpose of the rite. In Eden, however, the opening of the eyes, although it did result in divine likeness, brought also nakedness, judgment, expulsion and, eventually, death. If the Eden author drew from the *pîṭ pî* and/or the *wpt-r* in writing his own account of human creation in order to make a subtle comparison between humans and divine images, as I have tried to demonstrate, he has redefined the term. As in Gen 1, *bašelem ʾēlōhîm* is intimately related to the divine but it is not God's equal. Unlike the divine statues in the Washing of the Mouth and the Opening of the Mouth, in Gen 2:5–3:24 the deity and its images were clearly distinct.

The third chapter focused exclusively on the comparative rituals, the Mesopotamian Washing of the Mouth (*mîs pî*) and the Opening of the Mouth (*pîṭ pî*) and the Egyptian Opening of the Mouth (*wpt-r*). My primary goal was to establish how, according to these texts, a divine image was actually created. Through a re-analysis of the birthing and manufacturing imagery present in the *mîs pî pîṭ pî* and the *wpt-r*, it was demonstrated that both rituals presented the creation (or re-creation) of a god's image in similar terms: the god was born, but it was also constructed. Unlike in the *wpt-r*, the role of the Mesopotamian craftsmen was repudiated, but the texts, particularly incantations ST 199 and "When the god was fashioned, the pure statue completed,"² clearly emphasized and even celebrated the work of the divine craftsmen and the raw materials used to construct the statue. I concluded, therefore, that the *mîs pî pîṭ pî* did not denounce the manufacturing process itself, but only the participation of human craftsmen in this process. The *ilu* was both born and assembled "in heaven".

The relationship between the Nineveh and Babylon versions of the *mîs pî pîṭ pî* was also assessed. The primary difference between the two centered on the tamarisk *bugimnu*, interpreted as a divine "womb," and the birthing brick, both of which were noticeably absent from the Nineveh version. The many allusions to birth and newborn care in both versions of the *mîs pî pîṭ pî* and the parallels between the *pîṭ pî* and several Late Babylonian baby incantations confirmed the theory that the Opening of the Mouth was, at some level, the ritual birth of the image.

Further, I demonstrated that both the *mîs pî pîṭ pî* and the *wpt-r* rituals may have contained performative speech and/or acts in their opening

2. C. Walker and M. Dick, *The Induction*, 138–41, 150–51.

scenes. In the former, the priest referred to the statue as “*ilu*” even prior to its first mouth-washing and opening,³ while, in the *wpt-r*, the ritual began with a completed mummy.⁴ In both cases, the words, deeds and, in the case of the *wpt-r*, the painted depictions, were, perhaps, thought to generate the god’s presence in the form of its divine image. The achronological arrangement of events, that is, the reference to the statue as an *ilu* before it was animated and the purification of a completed mummy before it had even been constructed, therefore, can be explained as a proclamation at the outset of the ritual’s certain success.

There is, however, a second, perhaps better explanation of why the divine image in the mouth-washing and mouth-opening rituals would have been referred to from the start as *ilu* or by its personal name⁵ and why in the *wpt-r* it was represented as complete, even prior to its consecration: in some sense it was already divine. We must keep in mind that neither the *mīs pī pīt pī* nor the *wpt-r* marked the *original* creation of the god. Rather, it was thought to be the means by which *a particular divine manifestation of a pre-existent god* was brought into being. If, for example, a statue of Ea was commissioned, the *mīs pī pīt pī* was believed to be the means by which Ea was manifested *in the form of his divine statue*. His initial creation, however, had been accomplished already by the primordial gods at the beginning of time. According to *Enūma Eliš*, he was begotten (*ū-lid*) of Anu, the son of Anshar and Kishar, before the world and its human inhabitants were created.⁶ Thus, the *mīs pī pīt pī* would have enacted a ritual *rebirth*, or *reenactment*, of the god’s initial creation and birth.⁷ Despite the fact that the preconsecrated image was not yet activated, it was, in some sense, already a divine being. Yet we cannot ignore the fact that the *mīs pī pīt pī* refers to the *consecrated* statue (god) as *alam/šalmu*. Why does it not restrict *alam/šalmu* to the preconsecrated image? The answer may lie in our misunderstanding of the term. In defining *šalmu* scholars have often failed to take into account its use in the Washing of the Mouth and the Opening of the Mouth, where representation becomes referent, and type becomes prototype, that is, where *šalmu* becomes *ilu*. Thus, *šalmu* should not be restricted to “image,” though

3. Both the Nineveh and Babylon versions of the *mīs pī* begin, *enūma pī ili temessū*, “When you wash the mouth of a god” (idem, *The Induction*, 52 line 1 and 74, 77 line 1).

4. As depicted in Eberhard Otto’s Episodes 8, 1–7, which in the Rekhmire tomb are the episodes in sequence positions 1–8. See §3.4.4.

5. The personal name of the deity would have been substituted during the ritual for the phrase *ili šuati*, “that god.” See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 54 n. 47. See also TuL 27 in idem, *The Induction*, 230 line 1, and 233 line 23.

6. See *Enūma Eliš*, Tablet 1 line 15 in P. Talon, *The Standard Babylonian Creation Myth Enūma Eliš: Introduction, Cuneiform Text, Transliteration, and Sign List with a Translation and Glossary in French* (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2005), 33.

7. Note the presence of Anshar, Kishar, Anu-rabū at the *mīs pī* of a damaged image in TuL 27. Their names were included in a list of deities whose bricks were laid in the *bīt mummi* at the at the *mīs pī* for a damaged divine statue. See Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 241 line 35, and 242 line 37.

that is its primary meaning (see §4.3.3). Based on its use in the *mīs pî pî pî*, it also designates a god in the form of its image, that is, a theophany.⁸

If the *mīs pî pî pî* was a re-enactment of the god's initial creation and birth, and thus a re-birth of the god in the form of his statue, as I have suggested, then the funerary context of the *wpt-r* becomes less of an obstacle in understanding its relationship, particularly to the *pî pî*. Despite its mortuary context, the *wpt-r*, was, clearly, a ritual for the re-creation and, as suggested above in 3.4.3, the re-birth of the deceased in the form of (a divine statue of) Osiris, that is, a mummy. Hence, both rituals enacted a re-creation of a god in the form of a divine statue/image through a dual process of birth and manufacture. The additional parallels noted above, namely, the animation of the image with a particular emphasis on the eyes, its incorporation into the divine family,⁹ its physical care and nourishment, its clothing with the appropriate garments and insignia, and finally, its installation in the temple, collectively strengthen the case that these two rituals are historically related,¹⁰ although, as noted above, this cannot be proven.

Chapter 4 was principally concerned with defining *šelem* and *dāmût* in Gen 1:26–27 and determining whether or not these same concepts, despite the absence of the terms themselves, were present in the Eden story. I first examined the use of *šelem* in the Hebrew Bible and in particular, its usage in Genesis. I found that *šelem* in Gen 9:6 indicated that being created in the image (*šelem*) of God meant that humans represented him in the realm of law and justice. As noted in 4.3.2, murder was, at some level, an attack on God himself, and thus the death penalty was instituted by the divine pater-familias: God, as the kin of humankind, sought retribution for his own. I then examined the Akkadian cognate, *šalmu*, in contexts similar to Genesis 1:26–27, that is, where it denoted a royal figure described as a *šalmu* of the god. I determined that its semantic range was similar to Hebrew *šelem*, but unlike *šelem* it was not limited to representation but also included *divine manifestation*. That is, *šalmu* can refer to a theophany.

Based largely on its use in Ezekiel, our study of *dāmût* revealed that the term referred to correspondence and likeness, but that it did not seem to

8. See §4.3.3, above.

9. "Among your brother gods you are counted" ([*il*]-*ti* DINGIR.MEŠ ŠEŠ.MEŠ-*ka* [*ta-a*] *t-tam-nu*; Walker and Dick, *The Induction*, 147 line 10); "among your brother gods may you be counted ([*il*]-*ti* DINGIR.MEŠ ŠEŠ.MEŠ-*ka* [*ta-a*]-*t-tam-nu*; *ibid.*, 152–53 lines 6–7) and "you are censured, established, between your brothers the gods (*snTr.k Dd.ti imywt snw.k nTrw*) in Episode 6 (sequence position 7) of the *wpt-r* in the tomb of Rekhmire. See S. Quirke, "Contents of the Ritual for 'Opening the Mouth.'" See also §3.5, above. A similar injunction appears in the *wpt-r* of Unas, "Thou becomes a spirit, O Unas, amongst thy brothers, the gods" (A. Piankoff, *The Pyramid Texts of Unas* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968] 72, Utterance 224 no. 221).

10. The historical tie is further strengthened by the additional evidence, noted above, that both rituals enacted the re-creation of the deity in the form of its divine statue/image.

include “copy” nor “facsimilie,” as did *šelem*. Thus, while their semantic ranges overlapped, especially in the area of representation, *dāmūt* and *šelem* were not always synonymous. In Gen 5:1–3, however, both *dāmūt* and *šelem* were used to express correspondence between children and parents which was passed on biologically from parent to child.

In conclusion I then re-examined *šelem* and *dāmūt* in the context of Gen 1:26–27. I suggested that the nature of the divine-human relationship as it is presented in Gen 1 had three major components which were intimately related to one another: kinship, kingship and cult. The kinship component was evident not only by the parallel in Gen 5:1–3, but by the content of Gen 1:22–27 in which humans were created “according to God’s kind” and by multiple references elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible to Yahweh as father. It was further supported by the use of *šalmu* to describe the filial relationship between Tukulti Ninurta I and his divine father, Enlil, and in the opening lines of *Enūma Eliš*, where *muššulu* (“replica,” “representation”) and *tamšilu* (“likeness,” “resemblance”) expressed the relationships between Anu and his father Anshar, and Ea and his father, Anu, respectively. The kingship of humanity was indicated most clearly by God’s commands in Gen 1:28 to fill (*ml’*) the earth and to subdue (*kbš*) and rule over (*rdh*) creation, but it was further implied by the fact that being created in the image of God meant that humans were God’s representatives in the realm of law and justice (Gen 9.6). Finally, I noted that because *šelem* can designate a divine statue, the term may have been intended as a double entendre: the author compares humankind to a divine statue while framing the divine-human relationship in filial terms.

I then turned to the second major query in this chapter: does Gen 2:5–3:24 also present humankind as an image of God? To answer this question I examined Gen 2:5–3:24 in light of the Mesopotamian *mis pî pî pî* and the Egyptian *wpt-r* rituals. I found, despite the obvious differences among the texts, that there were a number of common features among them, including a temple garden, the animation of the image and specifically its sensory organs, the installation of the image in sacred space (a temple, shrine, or garden-temple), the feeding of the image, and especially the opening of the eyes as a means to divine-likeness. Further, I noted that there was a similarity in the general sequence of events and overall purpose. These parallels suggested that the Eden story did portray Adam as an “image,” but not in terms of a divine manifestation in the way a *šalmu* manifested a god in the *mis pî pî pî*. Rather, I concluded that the author incorporated selected features of divine statue animation rituals in order to redefine *šelem*. According to Gen 2:5–3:24 genuine *šālāmîm* are human beings, not statues.

The commonalities noted between Gen 2:5–3:24 and the Washing of the Mouth and the Opening of the Mouth rituals led to an important discussion on the relationship among the texts. In short, did the Eden author know the *mis pî pî pî* and/or the *wpt-r* firsthand? Although I was unable

to *prove* that he did, the parallels, both positive and negative,¹¹ in content, sequence, and overall purpose, *implied* that the Eden author had personal knowledge of the Washing of the Mouth and/or the Opening of the Mouth.

I then asked why the author would draw from divine statue animation texts in writing his account of human creation. It was concluded that he did so in order to offer a new framework for understanding the divine-human relationship: humankind was designed to dwell in the divine presence, that is, with God in his most holy place. The fact that Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden, however, highlighted one of the most significant differences between Gen 2:5–3:24 and the comparative texts: the opening of the eyes corrupted their status as co-rulers over creation and their filiation with the divine.

In light of my findings in chapter 4, namely, that, despite their differences, Gen 1:1–2:3 and Gen 2:5–3:24 both presented humankind as a *šelem*, it was then necessary to re-evaluate the relationship between the two biblical creation accounts. To set our assessment in context I began chapter 5 with a brief survey of the source-critical history of Gen 1:1–2:3. Although I agreed with the scholars surveyed that Gen 1:1–2:3 reflects a knowledge of Near Eastern creation myths and Near Eastern royal ideology, and specifically the identification of the king as an image of a god, there was nothing in Gen 1:1–2:3 which revealed a clear genetic relationship to any particular source.

The issues of date and authorship proved equally perplexing. However, based on the application of *šelem* in Gen 1:26–27 to the original human pair I raised the question as to whether or not this analogy could have had its greatest import theologically if it had been composed and promulgated during a period in which the manufacture and worship of *šalāmîm* in Israel was widespread, that is, in the preexilic period. More important, I tried to determine when in Israel's history the metaphor of sonship would have been a suitable analogy for the relationship between God and humankind. Although I was unable to fix a precise date of composition, I questioned whether the family metaphor would have been an acceptable framework from the perspective of an exilic or post-exilic Israelite for understanding Elohîm's relationship to humanity in general, which would have included Israel's arch enemy, the Babylonians. Nor was I able to verify a preexilic date for Gen 1:1–2:3, but in light of the application of *šelem* and *dāmût* to humanity in general rather than to Israel exclusively, I raised the possibility anew that the opening chapter of the Bible could reflect a preexilic setting.

I then turned to Gen 2:5–3:24. Our brief survey of source-critical history sufficiently demonstrated how little we know for certain about the Eden narrative's pre-history, its authorship, and its date of composition. In the

11. By "negative parallel," I am referring, for example, to the Eden author's use of the "opening of the eyes" in Gen 3:5, 7. See the following paragraph, below and §5.5.2.

end, I was unable to establish with certainty even a relative chronology between Gen 2:5–3:24 and Gen 1:1–2:3.

6.2. Methodological Implications: The Relationship among Genesis 2:5–3:24, the *mīs pī pīt pī* and the *wpt-r*¹²

In the first chapter I claimed that the Hebrew Bible cannot be fully understood without taking into consideration both the broader traditions of the ancient Near East and the specific historical contexts within which the Bible was composed. As the archaeological record and the biblical texts make clear, both Mesopotamia and Egypt exerted tremendous influence on Israelite culture and traditions, including but not limited to Israel's architecture, iconography, material culture, religious practice and literature. Thus, comparative work is vital to biblical interpretation. In chapter 1 I introduced two types of comparison often employed in biblical studies: typological, in which the similarities between genetically unrelated texts may be attributed to common human experience, and historical, in which the parallels among the entities being compared are attributed to a genetic relationship. Many of the parallels among the *mīs pī pīt pī* and the *wpt-r* and Gen 2:5–3:24 could be understood on the typological level. However, the placement of Adam in a sacred (temple-)garden, when viewed in light of the sum of the parallels among Gen 2:5–3:24 and the comparative texts, and in contrast to other Near Eastern accounts of human creation, could not be adequately explained apart from the Washing of the Mouth and the Opening of the Mouth. I concluded, thus, that the Eden author likely did have firsthand knowledge of divine image animation rituals, and that he incorporated selected aspects of them in order to define *šelem* as a human being. Although I adduced internal biblical support for the potential "installation" of Adam in Gen 2:15, it was necessary to appeal to extra-biblical sources which dealt specifically with the creation of images in order to understand more fully why the Eden author explained human creation as he did. Only by comparing Gen 2:5–3:24 to the *mīs pī pīt pī* and *wpt-r* was I able, it is hoped, to demonstrate that the biblical author was defining humankind as a *šelem* in Gen 2:5–3:24, despite the absence of the term from the story itself.

Similarly, internal biblical evidence (Gen 5: 1–3, Gen 1:11–27, and Yahweh as father in 4.5) suggested that *šelem* and *dāmūt* in Gen 1:26–27 may have been used to define, in part, the divine-human relationship in filial terms. The theory was corroborated by extra-biblical evidence which demonstrated that image and likeness terminology was used in Mesopotamia to define a filial relationship between a god (Enlil) and a king (Tukulti-

12. The relationship between the *mīs pī pīt pī* and the *wpt-r* was discussed in §3.5, above, and so will not be repeated here.

Ninurta I) and between divine beings (Anu) and their offspring (Nudimud/Ea), thus strengthening our claim that *šelem* and *dāmūt* seem to function as double *entendres* in Gen 1:26–27, defining humankind as “son” but also in relation to a divine statue.

In sum, then, I have attempted to show the relevance of divine image animation rituals, specifically the *mīs pī pīt pī* and the *wpt-r*, for our understanding of the creation of humankind in the Eden story. More generally, I have sought to demonstrate the benefits, and indeed, the necessity, of interpreting the Bible within the ancient Near Eastern context in which it was composed. To be sure, the comparative method has its weaknesses. In particular, it must maintain the proper balance between comparing similarities and differences, while avoiding both “parallelomania,”¹³ in which the parallels among the entities being compared are exaggerated, and its opposite extreme, “parallelophobia”.¹⁴ I have tried to avoid these pitfalls in three ways: 1) by distinguishing at the outset the difference between typological and historical comparisons; 2) by analyzing the Egyptian *wpt-r*, the Mesopotamian *mīs pī pīt pī*, and Gen 2:5–3:24 on their own, in their own *Sitze im Leben*, thus allowing for us to determine how each source, without reference to the others, presented the creation of an image; and 3) by giving equal attention to the differences among the texts, particularly as to how each defines “image”.

6.3. Areas for Further Inquiry

This work has raised a number of issues that merit further attention, but in the interest of space I will suggest only three. First, how do we understand the characterization of humankind in Gen 1:26–27 as created in the image and according to the likeness of God in light of the prohibition of images in Exod 20:3–4, 23; 34:17; Lev 19:4, 26:1; and Deut 4:15–19; 5:7–10; 27:15? Are we to conclude that Yahweh was indeed represented anthropomorphically but only by “images” of his own making, that is, by living human beings (who themselves are not gods) rather than by human-made statues of deities?

Second, are there other figures in the Hebrew Bible, aside from what I have already discussed, whom the text likens to a divine image? My own preliminary study indicates that there are at least two: corporate Israel in the book of Isaiah and the Israelite high priest.

In the book of Isaiah, corporate Israel is often compared to a statue. In some cases, she is a damaged image that must be smelted and recast (Isa 1:25; 48:4–10). At other points, her sensory organs malfunction (Isa

13. S. Sandmel, “Parallelomania,” *JBL* 81 (1962) 1–13.

14. W. Hallo, “Compare and Contrast: The Contextual Approach to Biblical Literature,” in *The Bible in the Light of Cuneiform Literature* (ed. Bruce William Jones, William W. Hallo, Gerald L. Mattingly; Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1990) 1–30, esp. p. 16.

6:9–10)—she is described as having eyes but unable to see, and having ears but being deaf. Her restoration, likewise, is described in terms of the opening of her eyes and ears and the animation of her sensory organs: “the eyes of those who see will not be smeared over, and the ears of those who hear will be attentive. The heart/mind of the hasty will discern knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers will hasten to speak” (Isa 32:3–4; see also Isa 35:5–6). When restored, corporate Israel is clothed with luminescent garments (Isa 62:1–3) and is said to be a crown of splendor and a royal diadem (Isa 62:3). Finally, there are several texts in Isaiah which refer to Israel as “the work of Yahweh’s hands” (Isa 29:23; 60:21; 64:7), the same phrase used in Isa 2:8, 37:19, and 41:29 to denote the divine statue who is made by human artisans. The contrast between Israel as the work of Yahweh’s hand and the divine statue as the work of human hands seems intentional.

The garments and regalia of the high priest are strikingly similar to the elaborate clothing and crowns made for cult statues. The combination of materials, the alternating patterns of ornamentation, and the delicate embroidery with gold and precious stones recalls the garments made for the gods, as described in surviving temple texts from Mesopotamia.¹⁵ For example, the high priest’s purple woolen headband with its inscribed gold plate finds a parallel in the purple woolen headbands worn by the divine statues, some of which were decorated on the front with a gold ornament. Its inscription, “holy to the LORD” identifies the priest both as holy and belonging to Yahweh, just as insignia and the crown identified the statue with the god whom it manifested. In short, the high priest, when dressed in his full regalia, seems to have been a living representation of Yahweh to Israel, but he may have also functioned as a living “cult statue” of corporate Israel designed to dwell in the presence of Yahweh, dressed, adorned, and coded in such a way as to rank him with kings and gods.¹⁶

Further investigation into corporate Israel and the high priest as “living cult images” promises to bring greater clarity to the characterization of the divine-human relationship in Gen 1:26–27 and Gen 2:5–3:24. For now, however, I hope that this work has contributed to the ongoing scholarly and lay interest in the Bible’s definition of human beings as created in the image and according to the likeness of God.

15. Oppenheim, “Golden Garments.”

16. Although I arrived at this idea on my own in 1998–99, the topic had already been addressed by Christine Palmer in her M.A. thesis at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, “Garments of Glory: The High Priestly Reflection of Yahweh,” in 1997. Her forthcoming dissertation, which will be completed in 2015 at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, will be the definitive work on the garments of the high priest.

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The Image of God in the Garden of Eden

Catherine McDowell presents a detailed and insightful analysis of the creation of 'adam in Gen 2:5–3:24 in light of the Mesopotamian *mīs pī pīt pī* (“washing of the mouth, opening of the mouth”) and the Egyptian *wpt-r* (opening of the mouth) rituals for the creation of a divine image. Parallels between the mouth washing and opening rituals and the Eden story suggest that the biblical author was comparing and contrasting human creation with the ritual creation, animation, and installation of a cult statue in order to redefine *šelem 'elohim* as a human being—the living likeness of God tending and serving in the sacred garden.

McDowell also considers the explicit image and likeness language in Gen 1:26–27. Drawing from biblical and extrabiblical texts, she demonstrates that *šelem* and *dāmūt* define the divine-human relationship, first and foremost, in terms of kinship. To be created in the image and likeness of Elohim was to be, metaphorically speaking, God's royal sons and daughters. While these royal qualities are explicit in Gen 1, McDowell persuasively argues that kinship is the primary metaphor Gen 1 uses to define humanity and its relationship to God.

Further, she discusses critical issues, noting the problems inherent in the traditional views on the dating and authorship of Gen 1–3, and the relationship between the two creation accounts. Through a careful study of the *tôledôt* in Genesis, she demonstrates that Gen 2:4 serves as both a hinge and a “telescope”: the creation of humanity in Gen 2:5–3:24 should be understood as a detailed account of the events of Day 6 in Gen 1.

When Gen 1–3 are read together, as the final redactor intended, these texts redefine the divine-human relationship using three significant and theologically laden categories: kinship, kingship, and cult. Thus, they provide an important lens through which to view the relationship between God and humanity as presented in the rest of the Bible.

Catherine McDowell (Ph.D. in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University) is an Assistant Professor of Old Testament at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Charlotte, NC, where she teaches Classical Hebrew, exegesis, and hermeneutics. She is currently working on a book that examines corporate Israel in the Hebrew Bible / Old Testament as an image bearer of God.



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